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AIRMEN O' WAR.

V. *THE AIR MASTERS.*

BY BOYD CABLE.

It is hardly known to the general public—which seems a pity—that the Navy has, working on the Western Front, some Air Squadrons who fly only over the land and have not so much as seen the sea, except by chance or from a long distance, from year's end to year's end. They have carried into their shore-going lives a number of Navy ways, like the curt 'Thank God' grace at the end of a meal, or the mustering of all hands for 'Divisions' (Navalese for 'Parade') in the morning, marking off the time by so many 'bells,' hoisting and lowering at sunrise and sunset the white ensign flown on a flagstaff on the 'drome'; they stick to their Navy ratings of petty officers and sub-lieutenants and so on, and interlard their speech more or less with Navy lingo—a very useful and expressive one, by the way, in describing air manoeuvres—but otherwise carry out their patrols and air work with, and on about the same lines as, the R.F.C.

Naval Number Something is a 'fighting scout' squadron, which means that its sole occupation in life is to hunt for trouble, to find and fight, 'sink, burn or destroy' Huns. At first thought it may seem to the Army which fights 'on the floor' that this job of a fighting machine is one which need interest no one outside the Air Service, that it is airman fighting against airman, and that, except from a point of mere sporting interest, the results of these fights don't concern or affect the rest of the Army, that the war would roll on just the same for them whichever side had the upper hand in the air fighting. Those who think so are very far wrong, because it is on the fighters pure and simple that the air mastery depends. Air work is a business, a highly complicated, completely organised and efficient business, and one bit of

it has to dovetail into another just as the Army's does. The machines which spot for our guns, and direct the shooting of our batteries to destroy enemy batteries which would otherwise destroy our trenches and our men in them; the reconnaissance machines which fly up and down Hunland all day and bring back reports of the movements of troops and trains and the concentration or removal of forces, and generally do work of which the full and true value is known only to those Heads running the war; the photographing machines which bring back thousands of pictures of all sorts—the line knows a few, a very few, of these, and their officers study very attentively the trench photos before they go over the top in a raid or an attack, and so learn exactly how, why, and where they are to go; the bombing machines which blow up dumps of ammunition destined for the destruction of trenches and men, derail trains bringing up reinforcements or ammunition to the Hun firing line, knock about the 'dromes and the machines which otherwise would be gun-spotting, reconnoitring, and bombing over our lines—and perhaps some day one may tell just how many Gotha raids have been upset and cancelled by our bomb-raids on a Hun 'drome—all these various working machines depend entirely for their existence and freedom to do their work on the success of the fighting machines. The working machines carry guns, and fight when they have to, but the single-seater fighting machines are out for fight all the time, out to destroy enemy fighters, or to put out of action any enemy working machine they can come across.

The struggle for the air mastery never ceases, and although it may never be absolute and complete, because the air is a big place to sweep quite clear and clean, the fact that scores of our machines spend all their flying hours anywhere over Hunland from the front lines to fifty miles and more behind them for every one Hun who flies over ours and, after a cruise of some minutes, races back again, is fairly good evidence of who holds the whip hand in the air.

All this introduction is necessary to explain properly the importance of the fighting squadrons' job, and why the winning of their fights is of such concern to every man in the Army, and to every man, woman, and child interested in any man in the Army. It also serves to explain why it was that three machines of Naval Number Something 'leapt into the air' in a most tremendous hurry-scurry, the pilots finishing the buckling of their coats (one going without a coat indeed) and putting on goggles after they had risen, when the look-out at the squadron telescope reported

that there were four Hun two-seater machines circling round at about 10,000 or 12,000 feet and just far enough over our front lines to look suspiciously like being on a gun-spotting or 'Art.-Ob.' bit of business.

That such a performance should be taking place almost within sight of their own 'drome doorstep naturally annoyed the Navals, and led to the immediate and hurried steps which took the three machines and pilots who were first ready into the air in 'two shakes of the jib-sheet.' The three men were all veteran fighters, and their machines three of the squadron's best, and if the four Huns had known their reputations and calibre it is doubtful if they would have dared to hang about and carry on with their work as they did. There was 'Mel' Byrne, a big man with a D.S.C. and a Croix de Guerre ribbon on his breast, and a score of crashed Huns notched to his credit, flying his 'Kangaroo'; 'Rip' Winkle, who had once met and attacked, single-handed, seven Huns, shot down and crashed three hand-running and chased the others headlong as far over Hunland as his petrol would take him: he was in his 'Minnenwerfer'; and the 'next astern' was the 'Un-settler' flown by 'Ten-franc' or 'Frankie' Jones, a youngster of—well, officially, twenty, so called, not because he was in his baptism named Frank, but because of a bet he had made with another Naval squadron as to which squadron would 'crash' the most Huns by a stated date. He was desperately keen to win his often-referred-to wager—so much so in fact that the other pilots chaffed him constantly on it and swore he would risk more to win his bet than he would to win a V.C.

The three wasted no time in the usual circling climb over the 'drome, but drove up full tilt and straight for the four dots in the sky. They climbed as they went, and since the Trichord type is rather famous for its climbing powers they made pretty good height as they went. 'Mel' in the lead, was in a desperate hurry to interrupt the enemy's artillery-spotting work, so gave away the advantage of height and sacrificed the greater climb they could attain with a lesser speed to the urgent haste and need of getting in touch with the enemy. They were still a good couple of thousand feet below when they came to within half a mile of the Huns, and the 'Kangaroo,' with the others following close, tilted steeply up and began to show what a Trichord really could do if it were asked of her. They were gaining height so rapidly that the Huns evidently did not like it, and two of them turned out and drove over to a

position above the Trichords. The three paid no attention to them, but climbed steeply, swinging in towards the other two machines which, since they still continued their circling, were probably continuing their 'shoot' and signalling back to their guns. But the Trichords were too threatening to be left longer alone. The two turned and flew east, with the Trichords in hot pursuit, slanted round, and presently were joined by their friends. Then the four plunged on the three in an almost vertical dive. Because the fighting scout only shoots straight forward out of a fixed gun, its bows must be pointing straight at a target before it can fire, and the Huns' straight-down dive was meant to catch the Trichords at a disadvantage, since it was hardly to be expected they could stand on their tails to shoot straight up in the air. But this is almost what they did. All three, going 'full out,' turned their noses abruptly up and opened fire. The Huns turned their dive off into an upward 'zoom' and a circling bank which allowed their observers to point their guns over and down at the Trichords, and fire a number of rounds.

But because it was now perfectly obvious that the Trichords had attained their first and most urgent object, the breaking-off of the Huns' 'shoot' and spotting for their guns, they could now proceed to the next desirable part of the programme—the destruction of the four Huns by methods which would level up the fighting chances a little. The 'Kangaroo' shot out eastward and began to climb steeply, Mel expecting that the other two would follow his tactics, get between the enemy and their lines, and climb to or above their height. But the 'Un-settler' was in trouble of some sort, and after firing a coloured light as a signal to the leader meaning 'Out of action; am returning home,' slid off west in a long glide with her engine shut off. Rip Winkle, on the 'Minnenwerfer,' followed the 'Kangaroo' east a few hundred yards and began to climb. The four Huns at first tried to keep above the level of the two, but it was quickly evident that the Trichords were out-climbing them hand over fist, were going up in a most amazing lift, in 'a spiral about as steep as a Tube stair.' The Huns didn't like the look of things and suddenly turned for their lines, dropped their noses, and went off full speed. The two Trichords cut slanting across to connect with them, and in half a minute were close enough to open fire. Two against four, they fought a fierce running fight for a minute or two. Then the 'Kangaroo' swept in astern of a Hun, dived and zoomed up under him and poured in

a point-blank burst of fire. Mel saw his bullets hailing into and splintering the woodwork of the underbody, was just in time to throttle down and check the 'Kangaroo' as the Hun's tail flicked up and he went sweeping down in a spinning nose dive. But a hard-pressed pilot will sometimes adopt that manœuvre deliberately to throw a pursuer out of position, and, knowing this, Mel followed him down to make sure he was finished, followed him watching the spin grow wilder and wilder, and finish in a splintering crash on the ground. Mel lifted the 'Kangaroo' and drove off full pelt after the others. Two of the Huns had dived and were skimming the ground—they were well over Hunland by now—and the other one and the 'Minnenwerfer' were wheeling and circling and darting in and out about each other exactly like two boxers sparring for an opening, their machine-guns rattling rapidly as either pilot or gunner got his sights on the target. Then when he was almost close enough to join in, Mel saw a spurt of flame and a gust of smoke lick out from the fuselage of the Hun. The machine lurched, recovered, and dipped over to dive down; the 'Minnenwerfer' leaped in to give her the death-blow, and under the fresh hail of bullets the Hun plunged steeply, with smoke and flame pouring up from the machine's body. The wind drove the flames aft, and in two seconds she was enveloped in them, became a roaring bonfire, a live torch hurtling to the ground. The Trichords saw her observer scramble from his cockpit, balance an instant on the flaming body, throw his hands up and leap out into the empty air, and go twisting and whirling down to earth.

A Hun Archie shell screamed up past the hovering Trichords and burst over their heads, and others followed in quick succession as the two turned and began to climb in twisting and erratic curves designed to upset the gunners' aim. They worked east as they rose and were almost over the lines when Mel, in one of his circlings, caught sight of a big formation flying towards them from the west. He steadied his machine and took another long look, and in a moment saw they were Huns, counted them and found fourteen, most of them scouts, some of them two-seaters of a type that Mel knew as one commonly used by the Huns on the infrequent occasions they get a chance to do artillery-observing work on our lines. Both Mel and Rip worked out the situation on much the same lines, that the Huns had some important 'shoot' on, were specially keen to do some observing for their guns, had sent the four two-seaters first and were following them up with other two-

seater observing-machines protected by a strong escort of fighters. Mel looked round for any sight of a formation of ours that might be ready to interrupt the game, saw none, and selecting the correct coloured light, fired a signal to Rip saying 'I am going to attack.' Rip, as a matter of fact, was so certain he would do so that he had already commenced to climb his machine to gain a favourable position. The fourteen were at some 17,000 feet, several thousand above the Trichords, but here the great climbing power of the Trichords stood to them, and they went up and up, in swift turn on turn that brought them almost to a level with the enemy before the Huns were within shooting distance. They came on with the scouts flying in a wedge-shaped formation, and the observing-machines protected and covered inside the wedge.

The odds were so hugely in their favour that it was clear they never dreamed the two would attack their fourteen, and they drove straight forward to cross above the lines. But the Trichords wakened them quickly and rudely. Each wheeled out wide and clear of the formation, closed in astern of it to either side, zoomed sharply to pick up an extra bit of useful height, dived, and came hurtling, engines going full out and guns shooting their hardest, arrow-straight at the two-seaters in the centre of the formation below them. Owing to the direction of their attack, only the observers' guns on the two-seaters had any chance to bring an effective fire to bear. It is true that the few scouts in the rear of the wedge did fire a few scattering shots. But scouts, you will remember, having only fixed guns shooting forward, can only fire dead ahead in the direction the machine is travelling, must aim the machine to hit with the gun. This means that the target presented to them of the Trichords flashing down across their bows made it almost impossible for them to keep a Trichord in their sights for more than an instant, if indeed they were quick enough to get an aim at all. Their fire went wide and harmless. The two-seaters did better, and both Trichords had jets of flaming and smoking tracer-bullets spitting past them as they came, had several hits through their wings. But they, because they held their machines steady and plunged down straight as bullets themselves on to their marks, were able to keep longer, steadier and better aim. Mel, as he drove down close to his target, saw the gaping rents his bullets were slashing in the fuselage near the observer, saw in the flashing instant as he turned and hoicked up and away the observer collapse and fall forward with his hands hanging over the edge of his cockpit. Rip

saw no visible signs of his bullets, but saw the visible result a moment after he also had swirled up, made a long fast climbing turn, and steadied his machine for another dive. His Hun dropped out of the formation and down in long twisting curves, apparently out of control. He had no time to watch her down, because half a dozen of the Hun scouts, deciding evidently that this couple of enemies deserved serious consideration, swung out and began to climb after the Trichords. Mel promptly dived down past them, under the two-seaters and up again under one. The instant he had her in the gun-sights he let drive and saw his bullets breaking and tearing into her. She side-slipped wildly, rolled over, and Mel watched for no more, but turned his attention and his gun to another target.

By now the half-dozen Hun scouts had obtained height enough to allow them to copy the Trichords' dive-and-shoot tactics, and down they came to the long clattering fire of their machine-guns. Both Trichords had a score of rents in wings and fuselage and tail planes, but by a mercy no shot touched a vital part. But they could hardly afford to risk such chances often, so went back to their plan of outclimbing and diving on their enemies. Over and over again they did this, and because of their far superior climb were able to keep on doing it despite every effort of the Huns. Machine after machine they sent driving down, some being uncertain 'crashes' or 'out-of-controls,' but most of them being at least definitely 'driven down' since they did not rejoin the fight, and were forced to drop to such landing-places as they could find. There were some definite 'crashes,' one which fell wrapped in roaring flame from stem to stern; another on which Rip saw his bullets slashing in long tears across the starboard wing, the splinters fly from a couple of the wing struts as the bullets sheared them through in splitting ragged fragments. In an instant the whole upper wing flared upward and back and tore off, the lower folded back to the body, flapped and wrenched fiercely as the machine rolled over and fell, gave and ripped loose; the port wings followed, breaking short off and away, leaving the machine to drop like a plummet to the ground. The third certain crash was in the later stages of the fight. The constant dive-and-zoom of the Trichords had the desired effect of driving the Huns lower and lower each time in their endeavour to gain speed and avoid the fierce rushes from above. Strive as they would, they could not gain an upper position. Some of them tried to fly wide and climb while the Trichords

were busy with the remainder ; but one or other of the two leaped out after them, hoicked up above them, drove them lower, or shot them down, in repeated dives.

The fight that had started a good 17,000 feet up and close over the trenches, finished at about 1000 feet and six to seven miles behind the German lines. At that height, the pilot of one Hun driven into a side-slip was not able to recover in time and smashed at full speed into the ground ; another was forced so low that he tried to land, hit a hedge and turned over ; a third landed twisting sideways and at least tore a wing away.

Then the two Trichords, splintered and rent and gaping with explosive-bullet wounds, with their ammunition completely expended, their oil and petrol tanks running dry, turned for home, leaving their fourteen enemies scattered wide and low in the air, or piled in splintered smoking wreckage along the ground below the line of their flight. The fight with the fourteen had run without a break for three-quarters of an hour.

They never knew exactly how many victims they had 'sunk, burned or destroyed.' As they stated apologetically in the official 'Combat Report' that night : 'Owing to the close presence of other active E.A.,¹ driven-down machines could not be watched to the ground.'

'Frankie' was almost more annoyed over this than he was over having had to pull out of the action with a dud machine. 'If we could have confirmed all your crashes,' he remarked regretfully, 'it would have been such a jolly boost-up to the squadron's tally—to say nothing of my wager.'

¹ E.A. = enemy aircraft.

A FEW MORE RECOLLECTIONS.

BY THE RIGHT HON. SIR ALGERNON WEST, G.C.B.

I.

IN a delightful autobiography Ellen Terry says : ' What is a diary as a rule ? A document useful to the person who keeps it, dull to the contemporary who reads it, invaluable to the student centuries afterwards who treasures it.' Whether these notes will ever be treasured I scarcely venture to hope, but at any rate they contain nothing set down in malice, and may perhaps one day become distillable into a drop of history ; at any rate I shall be fulfilling the saying : ' *Les souvenirs de vieillards sont une part d'héritage qu'ils doivent acquitter de leurs vivants.*' I had already written some volumes of ' *Recollections* ' which ended in 1886, and now I am tempted to produce some more, with an inner consciousness of their egotism and a conviction that they will be what Creevey would pithily have described as dull as be d——d.

At the close of a long official career I look back, with no diminishing interest, to the various statesmen I have seen and known.

The advantage of contact with such men made the Civil Service singularly attractive to me. The earliest friend I had, who introduced me into the Admiralty, was Sir James Graham, the First Lord, of whom Mr. Gladstone always spoke with great enthusiasm as being the best administrator he had ever known, but essentially timid ; he always differed on finance with Sir George Cornwall Lewis, whose judgment however was good, but action bad. Graham, he thought, would have been a Home Ruler, unlike Palmerston, who certainly would not. I was then too young to form a judgment on such matters, but subsequent history strongly confirms that opinion of Graham as a great administrator.

My friend, Lord Welby, in a letter written as lately as 1906, says : ' He was the first statesman who grasped the method by which alone the financial control over expenditure can be secured.'

Then I was brought into close official relations with Sir Charles Wood, when he was First Lord of the Admiralty, and T. G. Baring,

afterwards Lord Northbrook, his secretary. Sir Charles was of a 'nimble' and active mind and an equally nimble and active body. Not possessing the stately presence of Sir James Graham, he appeared from his activity to be set on wires. Deeply versed in all the traditions of the old Whigs, politics were food and drink to him. He possessed all the qualities of a party Whip with the grasp of an acute statesman. When he had left the Admiralty, he took me as his private secretary to the India Office, where he became the Secretary of State in that recently created Ministry. There I was struck with his extraordinary power of work, and the ability he showed in managing his Council. Of this I spoke fully in a history of his Administration in India, which I wrote when he had retired from office in consequence of an accident whilst hunting. Mr. Gladstone told me how much his admiration of Sir Charles Wood's work was increased by reading what I had said. I remained private secretary to his successor, Lord De Grey, until the change of Government came, when I remained and learned much as Director of Military Funds from the able financial secretary at the India Office, Mr. (afterwards Sir) Thomas Seccombe.

Upon the advent of a Liberal Government in 1868 I was unexpectedly asked to become private secretary to Mr. Gladstone, the proudest moment of my life. What I thought of him I have said in earlier volumes of my 'Recollections.'

After more than three years of private secretaryship I was appointed a Commissioner of Inland Revenue; and before I retired as Chairman, at the age of sixty, I had served under no less than eight Chancellors of the Exchequer.

The first of them was Mr. Lowe, of whom I saw little officially, being only a junior member of the Board. He was a brilliant speaker in attack, but very feeble in defence. I always thought much of his success in attacking the Reform Bill of 1867 was due to the cheers of the Opposition at the end of each of his scathing sentences, which gave him time to prepare his next epigrammatic attack. He told me himself how incapable he was of being crammed, and his physical infirmity prevented his reading figures, and so the two causes made his financial statements almost painful to listen to. When he had ceased to be Chancellor of the Exchequer, I wrote an account of his finance, which was far better than his halting periods had led people to believe. He was very grateful to me, saying that I and Mr. Noble, who had also written on the same subject, were the only people who had done him justice.

Though a cynic, he was the author of the following lines—

'Success has come—the thing that men admire,
The pomp of office and the care of state,
Ambition has nought left her to desire.
Success has come, but ah! has come too late.
Where is the bounding pulse of other days
That would have flashed enchantment through my frame,
The lips that would have loved to speak my praise,
The eyes that would have brightened at my name?
Oh! vanity of vanities. For truth
And time dry up the spring while joy was rife,
Teach us we are but shadows of our youth
And mock us with the emptiness of life.'

My next master as Chancellor was the greatest financier of his age—Mr. Gladstone.

Sir Stafford Northcote on taking office had inherited an enormous surplus from his predecessor Mr. Gladstone, which he was accused of frittering away.

His financial knowledge was as great as his industry, and when bored he had the blessed power of somnolence. 'Does he always go to sleep when discussing figures with you?' said a distinguished official to me one day. 'I am delighted to hear you say that,' I answered, 'because I always feared that it was I only who had that soporific effect on him.'

In earlier life he had been private secretary to Mr. Gladstone, and of course had learnt much finance from him and Sir Robert Peel. His gentleness and kindness were proverbial, and he could relate with extraordinary success anecdotes of his countrymen in the West.

Mr. Gladstone once described him as pliant, diligent, quick and acute, and with a temper simply perfect, but he was not fashioned for those days in which he lived, and his death at Lord Salisbury's door no doubt was hastened by the cruel announcement of his retirement from the Foreign Office, which he heard for the first time from the reporter of a local newspaper.

Then Mr. Gladstone came back, for a time only, but in that time he effected the great financial operation of converting the malt duty into a beer duty, the details of which I have spoken of in my 'Recollections.'

It was wonderful to think that Mr. Childers should succeed Mr. Gladstone. He had been instrumental in passing the Exchequer

and Audit Act, was a clear exponent of figures, and understood, as very few men did, the intricacies of Statistical Abstracts—but what a change!

Sir Michael Hicks Beach was only Chancellor of the Exchequer during my time for six months, and my official relations with him were very pleasant, but of course his short stay did not give him opportunities of doing much. He had not the gift, neither did he study the art, of popularity, but on his resignation of office he wrote me a letter saying he hoped he should never return to office, but if he did he hoped he should again be associated with me.

Sir William Harcourt was my next master, but when I was still with him he only produced what he called a Cottage Budget, remitting the tax on beer brewed in cottages with a rental under eight pounds, Alfred Milner having succeeded me as Chairman of Inland Revenue when the revision of the death duties took place.

He was always considered to have a hasty temper, and that could not be denied, but no bones were ever broken, and reconciliation was very rapid, and thus his natural kindheartedness came to the front and disclosed a tenderness which endeared him to those who knew him well.

Lord Randolph's descent among what he called a lot of d——d Gladstonians was a terror to us all, but that terror was soon changed into admiration of his manner of business, his power of concentration on the subject in hand, his modesty on matters of which he was naturally ignorant, his courtesy to all and the original Budget which never saw the light, but which is well described in the brilliant biography written by his son, that will take its place among the immortal biographies with Lockhart's Walter Scott, and Sir George Trevelyan's of his uncle, Lord Macaulay.

Mr. Goschen, who was an old friend of mine, succeeded Lord Randolph Churchill—the nail, as he called it, in his coffin. There never were two men so dissimilar, but with such contrasts the poor Civil servants have to bear as best they may. Lord Randolph was sharp, short, and decisive; Mr. Goschen loved minute criticisms, often criticising his own criticisms; eager to persuade the person he was talking to, and fond of deferring his decisions. I deeply regretted his giving up the wheel tax, which in my opinion was one of the fairest, and the objections to which were noisy but illogical.

In social relations he was charming, and very generous to me in the way he spoke of my retirement in the House.

In January 1888 I was constantly engaged in discussing proba-

bilities, possibilities, and impossibilities with him for his forthcoming Budget, while Sir Reginald (afterwards Lord) Welby, the Secretary to the Treasury, was engaged in a plan of which he told for effecting voluntary reductions and economies in the Queen's Civil List—a plan which, unfortunately, never saw the light.

To turn to my diary. At the beginning of 1888, my wife and I settled in London and had some pleasant little dinners, at one of which Mr. Gladstone and John Morley were present. The latter was not hopeful or satisfied at the speed with which the cause of Home Rule was progressing. Parnell had told him that there was no doubt that if Arthur Balfour would only continue strong and firm he would succeed in winning over some Irish opinion, for his recent reception in Dublin had exceeded that of Garibaldi or the Princess of Wales on their entry into London ; but the opportunity was missed.

Mr. Gladstone complained of his increasing deafness, and said another twelve months at the same rate would incapacitate him for public business, which we were unwilling to believe. As it ultimately turned out, however, the 'eyes' and not the 'ears' proved to be the real source of trouble.

Talking to Mr. Gladstone one night at Mr. Armitstead's, I was impressed by his idea that Parnell was a great Conservative element in Irish politics, and that time would prove this, and so help onward Home Rule.

Campbell-Bannerman enlivened the dinner by many old stories, among which was one of a parliamentary bull, I forget by whom made, 'that the white face of the English soldier was the backbone of the British army.' And another of a Scotch Judge, sentencing a man to death for stabbing a soldier : 'You have hurried a human soul,' he said, 'into eternity ; and worse than that you have—for which may God forgive you !—protruded a lethal weapon through your victim's trousers, which were the property of His Majesty.'

It was snowing when we came away, and through this snow Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone drove down to Dollis Hill, six or seven miles from London, I suppose, in an open victoria.

This was a little summer cottage, lent them by Lord Aberdeen ; and three years later, in the winter of 1891, Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone were happily enjoying themselves there while it was still a time of fog and snow. Indeed, Mr. Gladstone was quite independent of weather, as we all should be with minds and wills as strong as his.

One night, when he had a house in Park Lane, he came in, having walked through the snow from the House of Commons in twenty-eight minutes. Although he was going to lecture on Homer at Eton at the end of the week, and to speak the following Wednesday at Hastings, he let neither of these questions weigh on him, but sat down in the interval before dinner to read Sainte-Beuve on 'Port Royal.'

His vitality was immense. I remember his remarking that people were so astonished at an old man not being a mummy in a glass case that they used to stare at him when he walked about.

On March 12 I was at a House dinner at the Athenaeum, given by 'Hang Theology' Rogers, where I met Randolph Churchill. It was an interesting dinner, and it is sad to think how little worthy of record is carried away; the good stories perish in the telling.

Lord Randolph, while discussing a Bill of Lord Dunraven's for a reform of the House of Lords, said that it was an institution in which he did not take the slightest interest. He told us that he was only really afraid of two men in Europe—Bismarck and Gladstone.

Lord Randolph Churchill retired from the Chancellorship of the Exchequer at the end of 1888. While he filled that office I often had conversations with him about Mr. Gladstone, and remembered how on one occasion, on meeting him and a Liberal Unionist at dinner, he had said on passing out of the room, pointing to Mr. Gladstone, 'And that is the man you left; how could you have done it?' And this made me think it might be possible to effect a meeting between Mr. Gladstone and him. On one point at any rate, the love of economy, they would have sympathised, but my audacious attempt failed at the time, as will be shown by the following characteristic letters. Afterwards the meeting took place in a manner satisfactory to both of them.

In the early days of 1887 Lord Randolph wrote to me as follows:

'CARLTON CLUB, PALL MALL, S.W.

'June 16, 1887.

'MY DEAR SIR ALGERNON WEST—The exigencies of the political situation, which is of many sides and aspects, force me to make or try to make on Saturday at Trowbridge in Wiltshire a speech of a very polemical character in respect of Mr. Gladstone's Irish policy and parliamentary action. There are wheels within wheels at the present time which have all to be kept revolving and oiled as far as may be. We are governed by a gang of stolid, but in many ways powerful impostors, who must if possible be displaced and unmasked.

A most difficult and delicate process. I tell you this not because I am so conceited as to suppose that Mr. Gladstone would care for or even notice any speech of mine, but because I think you ought to know that I am going to make a speech on Saturday of a certain political description. I also think you ought to know that if just after a speech of that kind I were to have the honour of meeting Mr. Gladstone at a small dinner party and the fact were known, my enemies in the Tory Party who are as innumerable as the sands of the sea and as active and venomous as a swarm of gnats would scream and dance with mingled rage and joy.

'There you see I have written to you terribly frankly but you have been so kind and friendly that I know you will understand all I really mean.

'Yours very truly,

'RANDOLPH S. CHURCHILL.'

'DOLLIS HILL N.W.

'June 19, '87.

'MY DEAR WEST—I was extremely sorry that your kind and hospitable intentions should have been intercepted by my engagement of several weeks standing to Lord Ripon for next Wednesday.

'If any one desires to meet me for a public object, and you think that public object can be forwarded by the meeting, no amount of old scurrility or recent licence will induce me to refuse such a meeting, or when the meeting arrives to show any resentment for the one or the other. But the meeting must take place at *his* desire. And I even think it would be well that, for some short time at least before it, Lord Randolph should endeavour to confine himself within bounds, and abstain from indulgence in wanton untruth.

'With many thanks for your I fear abortive kindness,

'I remain,

'Sincerely yours,

'W. E. GLADSTONE.'

Curious points of administration occasionally arise out of Revenue problems. Before the Budget of 1888 took shape a new product called 'saccharine' had been discovered. It was said to possess 360 times the sweetening power of sugar, and could not, it was thought, be tested by the saccharometer. This would have thrown out all the Inland Revenue calculations on which the charge for beer duty was based, so at the request of the Chancellor of the Exchequer I saw Mr. Gladstone, who, after my explanations, promised to support him if he took steps to prohibit its use; I also arranged a large meeting of the principal brewers, and pointed out to them that if the use of this product were not forbidden,

the only alternative would be to increase largely the duty then paid on beer. Finally I obtained their consent, and a measure authorising the Treasury to prohibit its use—one apparently of very high-handed interference—was passed without opposition.

In October 1888 I was engaged in a tour of inspection of Inland Revenue offices in the country, for I held that no man could make a good Chairman of Inland Revenue unless he knew personally his principal officers.

On the 13th, having completed an inspection at Liverpool, I went to Hawarden, where I found the family alone. Mr. Gladstone said he had just come out of his MS. room—grateful to me above others, for I was the only one of his secretaries who had tied up his letters with tape, instead of indiarubber bands, which rotted.

After my return to town I called on Mr. Gladstone, who was staying with Mr. Stuart Rendel in Sir Robert Peel's old house in Whitehall Gardens, and found him reading O'Connell's letters. He talked of the proposed amalgamation of Inland Revenue and Customs, about which I had given evidence before the Ridley Commission on May 12. I said that Ridley and Goschen both wished him to give evidence, and he replied that he would gladly do so next day; then he went into an historical sketch of Customs, which since the repeal of differential duties—Navigation laws, Colonial duties—had almost ceased to exist; he asked me how I could account for the difference between the two Boards—one, the Customs, always objecting and rarely suggesting, the other forward in reforms and always capable; he repeated that he had never known a suggestion from the Customs of any real value; one he had adopted—one penny on each packet of imports, which they assured him would be objected to by nobody, but it was received with such a howl that he had to withdraw it at once, and run away like a dog with its tail between its legs.

In all his official negotiations with regard to Tariffs and the French Treaty of 1860, he had invariably consulted the Inland Revenue, and, except in connexion with wine, he hardly ever referred to the Customs. He was bound to say that though Sir Thomas Fremantle had opposed everything, he had loyally done his best to give effect to his policy when inaugurated. The best men at the Customs had been St. John and Ogilvie, who came nearest to the best type of Inland Revenue officials. I caught Goschen and sent him to Mr. Gladstone, and he told Ridley later that Mr. Gladstone would give evidence. I was examined for two and a half hours on November 22, satisfactorily, I think, but Welby was

very much opposed to amalgamation, and I felt sure would get his way.

Mr. Gladstone was examined before the Ridley Commission and gave strong evidence for amalgamation, as did Childers, but it was beating the air, as the Treasury was opposed to it, and as the large majority of the members had been secretaries of that authority.

On March 30, 1889, we dined with Lord Sydney, who told my wife, apropos of a picture of Sir Robert Walpole, that it was in that very room that he and his brother-in-law, Lord Townshend, drew swords on each other and were interrupted by the ladies rushing in and separating them.

Mr. Gladstone in conversation one day praised Tennyson's life much, thought he was a philosopher as well as a poet, but wanting in the historical element. He was as a boy very remarkable. He thought his saying true, that it was difficult to believe, but more difficult not to believe. I told him that I had never any difficulty in believing. He said of course it came more to those who went closely into those questions, and this was not everybody's duty. Talking of Tennyson's story of his Calvinistic aunt, he said there was a certain clergyman, Aitken, the founder of a small sect of Aitkenites, who said he could not find words to express how few would be saved, but it certainly would not be two in a million!

Then the Franco-German war was discussed, and John Morley said MacMahon's great mistake was in marching to Mézières instead of to Paris, where he might have successfully proclaimed a Republic. The moment Moltke heard of his movement he put his finger on the map at Sedan and said: 'It will be there that we shall capture the French Army.'

I talked of Odo Russell's delightful letters to Lord Clarendon when he was with the German Army and in intimate relations with Bismarck, and which I sincerely hope may some day see the light.

I was very much surprised to find that neither Mr. Gladstone nor John Morley thought him more than a good conversationalist and writer. The latter thought that he knew very little of French politics, and did not think much of our diplomatic service when he considered that Lord Lytton and Morier were its brightest ornaments.

Mr. Gladstone had a very high opinion of Lord Clarendon as an able diplomatist. Of all the colleagues he had had he considered him the most agreeable.

Talking of Arthur Balfour's leadership in the House of

Commons, John Morley amused us by quoting Mrs. Jeune's saying to him that she feared he must be a failure, for even Randolph Churchill admitted it !

On a cold day in January 1891 I reached Hawarden at six o'clock, and found the only visitors, Lady Gladstone and Miss Gladstone, in the drawing-room. At dinner we talked about certain matters connected with the postal revenue and manufacture of stamps. Any subject connected with the Inland Revenue, luckily for me, always seemed to conjure up happy reminiscences of former triumphs in Mr. Gladstone's mind.

He appealed to me for my opinion of Lord Randolph Churchill : I said that, next to himself, as Chancellor of the Exchequer I would sooner have him to work with. He was an excellent man of business, knowing his own mind and devoting it absolutely to the matter in hand. Sharp, short, and decisive. He said he admired him very much, and on every occasion he had met him his manners had been very agreeable.

Mr. Gladstone was rather in a pessimistic frame of mind on the state of society and was not, he said, over-sanguine as to the continuance of belief, and feared that the 'seen,' such as riches and luxuries, was eclipsing the 'unseen.' He did not care a rush for Agnosticism, Atheism, Positivism or the harm they could do ; but he feared the careless and luxurious lapse from Christianity. If that was to go, he said, 'give me the religion of the early Greeks.' The best way he knew to combat such dangers was to encourage reading, and with this sense of duty before him, he was trying to found a Library in Hawarden, where he hoped there would some day be 40,000 volumes.

Then he told me how he recollected a dinner of workmen, given by Sir Stephen Glynne, where a man spoke who had been a pitman with wages of ten shillings a week, at which time the agricultural labourer could have had no more than seven or eight shillings and a family to support with corn at one pound a bushel, that is eight pounds a quarter. What a contrast to pitmen now earning two and three pounds a week and corn thirty-five shillings a quarter !

I asked him why he always looked back with such admiration and enthusiasm on George Canning. He said : ' You must recollect how young I was when I first heard him. I was twelve years old, and his speeches were clear and admirable—over them he expended immense care, as I know, for Mr. Therry sent me his speeches corrected by himself, and they were altered and polished to the utmost extent, and with the greatest elaboration.'

He did not think that his wit shone in the House of Commons, but he showed boundless courage. When asked by an Opposition in a majority what he would do about Reform, 'Oppose it to the utmost of my power,' he replied, 'and the same with regard to the Test and Corporation Act.'

He told me how Canning illustrated at Liverpool the absurdity of the Reformers claiming to have a universal panacea for the relief of all ills; he said they reminded him of a painter who was famous for painting Red Lions. A man building a house said he wanted a fine bold picture for his dining-room. The painter said there could be no doubt that the most suitable thing would be a picture of a large Red Lion, to which he assented. He then consulted him as to his wife's boudoir, which he desired to ornament with some finely drawn panels. The painter said he had considered the question very fully, and thought undoubtedly the best subject would be a small Red Lion.

He did not think Canning was sarcastic in the House. Disraeli was the greatest 'Sarcast' he ever knew.

It was now getting late, and we went into the drawing-room; he going to his 'Temple of Peace' (which he begged me to consider as my own) to read Dunckley's 'Melbourne,' also Justin McCarthy's 'Peel,' which he did not like so much as his 'History.' He oddly enough never knew Melbourne.

January 10.—A lovely day. At breakfast Mr. Gladstone, who had been through the cold and snow to church, came in, and again contrasted the work of the Customs and Inland Revenue, much to the advantage of the latter.

At twelve o'clock I went up to Mrs. Gladstone, who had been ill but was better. She told me she was seventy-nine, and that Mr. Gladstone was calm and still hopeful about Ireland and well and strong. He came in, and plunged at once into Irish politics. 'Up to November,' he said, 'I should have considered Parnell fair, straightforward, and rigidly honest in all public transactions. It would be a nice question in casuistry to say whether a man, stating what had never occurred, could be considered as breaking confidence.'

I told him of what John Morley had said to me at the time of the trial: 'Don't be carried away by any enthusiasm for Parnell, who is clever, but cold and calculating.' Mr. Gladstone said: 'I never was enthusiastic about him, but only enthusiastic against the foul measures taken to crush him.' I said I could only look upon him as having been driven into a corner, and losing his temper

and his head, which I think is the case. He thought perhaps I was right and certainly charitable. He told me the only time he had an interview with Parnell before seeing him at Hawarden was during a division in the House when the Committee was sitting on Royal Grants. He told Parnell that he could assure him that the Prince of Wales bore no ill-will to Ireland, and would raise no obstacles to the realisation of her wishes. He believed the Prince of Wales owed his allowance to the support Parnell gave him in that Committee.

In the afternoon we drove to his Institute, where he had with his own hands arranged the thousands of volumes it contained. He was full of hopes for its future usefulness. His fears of the sale of Lord Acton's 60,000 volumes were removed now. He talked again very fully of the autumn troubles, and how we must none of us despair. I told him of Lord Randolph Churchill's letter, saying what an opportunity the Tories now had of settling once for all the whole question of the Government of Ireland. He said how earnestly he hoped they might avail themselves of it, but he feared they would not with Hartington's consent. What a sad state of things it was when two such *beaux esprits* as Chamberlain and Randolph Churchill were out of the Government and the immediate Opposition, and adrift at sea.

Then we fell to talking of Disraeli, and what laughs he might have indulged in inwardly at his successes against the Tory Party, which he led. Lord John Russell was much struck when Disraeli, sitting among the Tories, spoke about their prejudices against the Jews, saying that the country that oppressed them was abandoned by Providence, who blessed those that blessed them.

I talked of my idea of retiring when I was sixty, in a little more than a year. At first he said the State would never tolerate it, and I had not been Chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue long enough, but when I showed him that I had been Chairman nearly ten years, that I thought at sixty I should still be young enough to take an interest in other things, and should like to be politically free; that I had, moreover, no prospects of working with a Chancellor who would be specially pleasing to me, he began to see the force of what I said, and added: 'Your sweeping scheme of revision of the death duties (never adopted) I should be prepared to accept, but neither Childers nor Harcourt would have the courage for it; your only hope is Randolph.'

Here we reached the lake and, getting out of the carriage soon after, walked home through the snowy woods. He said he had

enjoyed a recent visit to the Glen, but above everything else had delighted to see Sir Charles Tennant purring with delight over his pictures, his books, and his family. He made a capital speech on his birthday. 'As for Margot,' Mr. Gladstone said, 'I told her a long story about Peel, and then within two months she wrote and asked me to tell it all to her again!' I abstained from mentioning that her memory was good, which was the fact, but her anxiety of course was to get the story in his own handwriting. I told him of her little story 'Clara,' which he should read, and for which she had got three guineas. 'What can be so pleasant,' he said, 'as money made by the sweat of a man's brow?' He made a good deal now, but got nothing at the time for his Homeric studies, which now commanded a good price in the book market.

In his Homeric translations Lord Derby passed over a passage where Homer mentioned the names of eight Nereids as utterly unimportant, whereas the student knew that these eight Nereids were mentioned as representing the various forms of religion. The Greeks do not now call water *ὕδωρ* but *νερό*. He added that Lord Derby trusted to his great genius and natural gifts more than to hard work.

Mr. Gladstone told me that he thought Goschen was a clever man, but though he distinguished himself at College he had never shown any trace of high literary cultivation or classical knowledge. As to his suspicious nature, that was the especial bane of many political men: Cardwell, Graham, but not Aberdeen.

Bishop Temple preached to us in the morning in a terribly rasping voice; and Mr. Gladstone said that in Nonconformist chapels the congregation would interfere in such a case. He heard one day at the City Temple a complaint made to Dr. Parker that he did not speak plainly enough, which Parker turned off by saying 'I always observe that people, when they become hard of hearing, always seat themselves as far from the preacher as they can.' My brother Richard once asked an old parishioner if she could hear. 'Yes, sir,' she said; 'I manages to get close up to the Fowl'—meaning the lectern!

Dr. Parker wrote a very good skit on Huxley and Tyndall and Mill, as the three friends of Job.

Mr. Gladstone hated all changes, as I have said, and I maintained always he was the only real Conservative existing. 'Yes,' he said, 'I hate all the radical ideas of the present Tory Government.'

In the afternoon walk he sowed much seed on stony rocks, which will never bring forth anything, for he talked over my head

about the Jansenists and Port Royal and their history, in which he was deeply interested.

At six o'clock we walked out into the cold and snowy park, he with his little lanthorn in his hand, to church. Talked of the condition of the House of Lords and of the many black sheep in such a limited body, the natural result perhaps of young men brought up to idleness, wealth, and position. Many men were in favour of the total abolition of the hereditary principle. He said he saw the difficulties of any reform. The Lords set free would be such formidable candidates for the House of Commons that that assembly would not like it.

But what could be said of a Senate of which the best that could be postulated of it by its apologists was that they never pushed things so far as to cause a revolution? It was urged that they were there to prevent panic legislation. The two worst instances of panic legislation in his time were the 'Church Discipline Bill' and the 'Ecclesiastical Bill,' and they were both rushed through the House of Lords.

Dinner was passed in talk of ghost stories and tales of 'Spiritists,' as he disliked the term 'Spiritualists.'

At breakfast the next day (January 13, 1891) I tried to maintain the constantly increasing improvement in every branch of life. He quoted Bacon as saying that as the mechanical improvement of a nation increased, the decadence of the nation began, which I thought, humbly, was opposed to the truth. He admitted that he could not support the proposition by argument, which satisfied me.

Afterwards he showed me all his late correspondence; among it was a letter written of him by Lord Acton.

'The line taken was the best and highest. If we are all baffled and weakened for the moment we should have been so, just as much if he had not done what he did, and the loss would have been permanent, without hope of recovery, and without the redeeming dignity, the moral superiority, and the splendid act with which he put in the front considerations not personal to himself.'

Mr. Gladstone then came to the door to see me off. As I was leaving Hawarden: 'There is one improvement,' he said, 'you did not mention, and that's the improvement of the Inland Revenue!' And so my happy visit ended.

THE BATTLE OF THE GIANTS.

SOME IMPRESSIONS AND REFLECTIONS.

BY BENNET COPPLESTONE.

It is strange how events of great national importance become associated in one's mind with small personal experiences. I have told with what vividness I remember the receipt in November 1914 of private news that the battle cruisers *Invincible* and *Inflexible* had left Devonport for the Falkland Islands, and how I heard Lord Rosebery read out Sturdee's victorious dispatch to six thousand people in St. Andrew's Hall, Glasgow. In a similar way the Jutland battle became impressed upon my mind in an unforgettable personal fashion. On May 22, 1916, I learned that Admiral Beatty had at his disposal the four 'Cats'—*Lion*, *Tiger*, *Queen Mary*, and *Princess Royal*—of about 29 knots speed, and each armed with eight 13·5-inch guns, the two battle cruisers *New Zealand* and *Indefatigable*, of some 27 knots of speed, and carrying each eight 12-inch guns, and the Queen Elizabeths, of 25 knots, all of which were armed with eight of the new 15-inch guns, which were a great advance upon the earlier thirteen-point-fives. The ships of the Fifth Battle Squadron had all been completed since the war began. The *Queen Elizabeth* herself went into dock at Rosyth for repairs, so that for immediate service the squadron was reduced to four ships—*Barham*, *Valiant*, *Warspite*, and *Malaya*.

Upon the following Saturday, May 27, I was invited to lunch in one of the battleships, but upon arrival at South Queensferry, I found the Fleet under Short Notice for sea, and no one was allowed to leave the ships, or to receive friends on board. It was a beautiful day, the long, light-coloured Cats and the Futurist-grey battleships were a most noble sight, but I felt too much like a Peri shut out of Paradise to be happy in observing them. A day or two later, Thursday, June 1, was fixed for my next visit, but again the Fates were unkind. When I arrived in the early morning and stood upon the heights overlooking the anchorage, Beatty's Fleet had gone, and, though I did not know it, had even then fought the Jutland battle. In the afternoon, news came with the return to the Forth of the damaged battleship *Warspite* surrounded by her attendant destroyers. That was on the Thursday afternoon, but

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it was not until the evening of Friday that the first Admiralty message was issued, that famous message which will never be forgotten either by the country or by the Navy. The impression which it made may be simply illustrated. I was sitting in my drawing-room after dinner, anxiously looking for news both on national and personal grounds, when a newsboy shrieked under my window 'Great Naval Disaster: Five British Battleships Sunk.' The news printed in the paper was not so bad as that shouted, but it was bad enough; it gave the impression of very heavy losses incurred for no compensating purpose, and turned what had really been a conspicuous naval success into an apology for a naval disaster. As a humble student, I could to some extent read between the lines of the dispatch and dimly perceive what had happened, but to the mass of the British public, the wording of that immortal document could not have been worse conceived. To them it seemed that the End of All Things was at hand.

The story runs that the first bulletin was made up by clerks from scraps of messages which came over the wireless from the Grand Fleet, but in which the most important sentence of all was omitted. 'The Germans are claiming a victory,' wailed the Admiralty clerks through the aërials at Whitehall. 'What shall we say?' 'Say,' snapped the Grand Fleet, 'say that we gave them hell!' If the Admiralty had only said this, said it, too, in curt, blasphemous naval fashion, the public would have understood, and all would have been well. What a dramatic chance was then lost! Think what a roar of laughter and cheering would have echoed round the world if the first d'spatch had run as follows:

'We have met and fought the German Fleet, and given it hell. Beatty lost the *Queen Mary* and *Indefatigable* in the first part of the battle when the odds were heavily against us, but Jellicoe coming up enveloped the enemy, and was only prevented by mist and low visibility from destroying him utterly. The Germans have lost as many ships as we have, and are shattered beyond repair.'

That message, in a few words, would have given a true impression of the greatest sea fight that the world has known, a fight, too, which has established beyond question the unchallengeable supremacy of British strategy, battle tactics, seamanship, discipline, and devotion to duty of every man and boy in the professional Navy. In the technical sense, it was an indecisive battle: the Germans escaped destruction. But morally, and in its practical results, no

sea fight has been more decisive. Eighteen months have passed since that morning of June 1 when the grey dawn showed the seas empty of German ships, and though the High Seas Fleet has put out many times since then, it has never again ventured to engage us. Jutland drove sea warfare, for the Germans, beneath the surface, a petty war of raids upon merchant vessels, a war—as regards neutrals—of piracy and murder. By eight o'clock on the evening of May 31, 1916, the Germans had been out-fought, out-maneuvred, and cut off from their bases. Had the battle begun three hours earlier, and had visibility been as full as it had been in the Falkland Islands action, had there been, above all, ample sea room, there would not have been a German battleship afloat when the sun went down. There never was a luckier fleet than that one which scrambled away through the darkness of May 31–June 1, worked its way round the enveloping horns of Jellicoe, Beatty, and Evan-Thomas, and arrived gasping and shattered at Wilhelmshaven. We can pardon the Kaiser, who, in his relief for a crowning mercy, proclaimed the escape to be a glorious victory.

But though the Kaiser may, after his manner, talk of victories, German naval officers cherish no illusions about Jutland. If one takes the trouble to analyse their very full dispatches, their relief at escaping destruction shines forth too plain to be mistaken. Admiral Scheer got away, and showed himself to be a consummate master of his art. But he never, in his dispatches, claims that the British Fleets were defeated in the military sense. They were foiled, chiefly through his own skill, but they were not defeated. The German dispatches state definitely that the battle of May 31 'confirmed the old truth, that the large fighting ship, the ship which combines the maximum of strength in attack and defence, rules the seas.' The relation of strength, they say, between the English and German Fleets 'was roughly two to one.' They do not claim that this overwhelming superiority in our strength was sensibly reduced by the losses in the battle, nor that the large English fighting ships—admittedly larger, much more numerous, and more powerfully gunned than their own—ceased after Jutland to rule the seas. Their claim, critically examined, is simply that in the circumstances the German ships made a highly successful escape. And so indeed they did.

The Jutland battle always presents itself to my mind in a series of clear-cut pictures. Very few of those who take part in a big naval battle see anything of it. They are at their stations, occupied

with their pressing duties, and the world without is hidden from them. I try to imagine the various phases of the battle as they were unfolded before the eyes of those few in the fighting squadrons who did see. Perhaps if I try to paint for my readers those scenes which are vividly before me, I may convey to them something of what I have tried to learn myself.

Let us transport ourselves to the signal bridge of Admiral Beatty's flagship, the battle cruiser *Lion*, and take up station there upon the afternoon of May 31, at half-past two. It is a fine afternoon, though hazy; the clouds lie in heavy banks, and the horizon, instead of appearing as a hard line, is an indefinable blend of grey sea and grey cloud. It is a day of 'low visibility,' a day greatly favouring a weak fleet which desires to evade a decisive action. We have been sweeping the lower North Sea, and are steering towards the north-west on our way to rejoin Jellicoe's main Fleet. Our flagship, *Lion*, is the leading vessel of the First Battle Cruiser Squadron, and following behind us, we can see the *Princess Royal*, *Queen Mary*, and *Tiger*. At a little distance behind the *Tiger* appear the two ships which remain to us of the Second Battle Cruiser Squadron, the *Indefatigable* and *New Zealand*, fine powerful ships, but neither so fast nor so powerful as are our four Cats of the First Squadron. Some five or six miles to the west of us we can make out, against the afternoon sky, the huge bulk of the *Barham*, which, followed by her three consorts, *Valiant*, *Warspite*, and *Malaya*, leads the Fifth Battle Squadron of the most powerful fighting ships afloat. We are the spear-head of Beatty's Fleet, but those great ships yonder, silhouetted against the sky, are its most solid shaft.

Word runs round the ship that the enemy has been sighted, but since we know nothing of his numbers or of his quality—Jutland, though anticipated and worked for, was essentially a battle of encounter—our light cruisers fly off to make touch and find out for us. Away also soars a seaplane, rising from the platform of our carrying ship *Engadine*, a clumsy-looking seagull, with its big pontoon feet, but very fast and very deftly handled. The seaplane flies low, for the clouds droop towards the sea, it is heavily fired upon, but is not hit, and it returns to tell us—or rather the Admiral, in his conning tower below—just what he wishes to learn. There is an enemy battle cruiser squadron immediately in front of us, consisting of five armoured ships, with their attendant light cruisers and destroyers. The German battle cruisers are: *Derfflinger*

(12-inch guns), *Lützow* (12-inch), *Moltke* (11-inch), *Seydlitz* (11-inch), and another stated by the Germans to be the *Von der Tann*, which had more than once been reported lost. Since our four big battle cruisers carry 13·5-inch guns, and two others guns of 12-inch, and the four battleships supporting us great 15-inch weapons, we ought to eat up the German battle cruisers if we can draw near enough to see them distinctly. By half-past three the two British battle cruiser squadrons are moving at 25 knots, formed up in line of battle, and the Fifth Battle Squadron, still some five miles away, is steaming at about 23 knots. The Germans have turned in a southerly direction, and are flying at full speed upon a course which is roughly parallel with that which we have now taken up. During the past hour we have come round nearly twelve points—eight points go to a right angle—and are now speeding away from Jellicoe's Grand Fleet, which is some forty miles distant to the north and west. Since we are faster than Jellicoe, the gap between us and him is steadily opening out.

From the signal bridge, a very exposed position, we can see the turret guns below us and the spotting top above. The turrets swing round, as the gunners inside get their directions from the gunnery-control officer who, in his turn, receives every few moments the results of the range-finding and rate of change observations which are being continually taken by petty officers charged with the duty. Further corrections will be made when the guns begin to shoot, and the spotting officers aloft watch for the splashes of the shells as they fall into the sea. Naval gunnery, in spite of all the brains and experience lavished upon it, must always be far from an exact science. One has to do with moving ships firing at other moving ships, many factors which go to a precise calculation are imperfectly known, and though the margin of error may be reduced by modern instruments of precision, the long fighting ranges of to-day make the error substantial. The lower the visibility, the greater becomes the gunner's uncertainty, for neither range-finding nor spotting can be carried on with accuracy. Even on the clearest of days it is difficult to 'spot' a shell-splash at more than 14,000 yards (eight land miles), a range which is short for the huge naval gun. When many guns are firing, it is not easy to pick up the splashes of one's own shells, and to distinguish between their water-bursts and the camouflage put up by an enemy.

At our position upon the signal bridge, though we are there only in spirit, we probably feel much more of excitement than does any

officer or man of the big ship upon which we have intruded our ghostly presence. Most of them can see nothing; all of them are too busy upon their duties to bother about personal feelings. There is an atmosphere of serene confidence in themselves and their ship which communicates itself even to outsiders like us. At 3.48 the enemy is some 18,500 yards distant, and visible, for the light has improved, and firing begins almost simultaneously from us and our opponents. The first crash from the *Lion's* two fore-turrets nearly throws us off the bridge, so sudden and fierce it is, and so little does its intensity seem to be subdued by our ear-protectors. But as other crashes follow down the line we grow accustomed to them, grip tightly at the hand-rail, and forget ourselves in the grandeur of the sight unfolding itself before us. Away, far away, is the enemy, hull down, smothered in smoke and by the huge gouts of spray thrown up by our bursting shells. He is adding to the splashes by firing his own side batteries into the sea, to confuse the judgment of our spotters.

At each discharge from our ship, a great cone of incandescent gas flames forth, cutting like a sword through the pale curtain of smoke. From the distant enemy ships we can see thin flashes spurt in reply, and his shells pitch beside us and over us, lashing our decks with sea foam and sometimes throwing a torrent of water over the spotting top and bridge. Before five minutes have passed, we are wet through, our ears are drumming in spite of the faithful protectors, and all sensation except of absorbed interest in the battle has left us. At any moment we may be scattered by a bursting shell, or carried to the bottom with our sunken ship, but we do not give a thought to the risks.

While we are firing at the enemy, and he is firing at us at ranges varying from ten to eight miles, a fierce battle is going on between the lines of big ships. Light cruisers are fighting light cruisers, destroyers are rushing upon destroyers. At an early stage in the action, the German Admiral Hipper—in command of the battle cruisers—launched fifteen destroyers at our line, and was taught a rough lesson in the quality of the boys who man our T.B.D.s. Twelve of our heavier and more powerfully armed destroyers fell upon the German fifteen, huddled them into a bunch, and had started to lay them out scientifically with gun and torpedo, when they fled back to the shelter of their own big ships. Following them up, our destroyers delivered a volley of torpedoes upon the German battle cruisers at less than 3000 yards distance. Probably

no damage was done, for it is the forlornest of jobs to loose mouldies against fast manœuvring ships, but lack of success does not in any way dim the splendour of the attempt. As light cruisers and destroyers fight and manœuvre, the torrent of heavy shells screams over their heads, flying as high in their course as Alpine mountains, and dropping almost vertically near the lines of battle cruisers.

As soon as we turned to the south in pursuit of Hipper's advance squadron of battle cruisers, Admiral Evan-Thomas closed his supporting battleships upon us, and we can now see them clearly about two miles away on our starboard quarter, formed in line of battle, the flagship *Barham* leading. At eight minutes past four they join in the fight, firing at a range of 20,000 yards (12 miles), not an excessive distance for their tremendous flat-shooting 15-inch guns if the light were good, but too far for accuracy now that the enemy ships can be seen so very indistinctly. Up to now the German gunnery has been good; our ships have not often been seriously struck, but the shells in bunched salvos have fallen very closely beside us. Our armour, though much thinner than that of the battleships behind us, is sufficient to keep off the enemy's light shells—our 13·5-inch shells are twice the weight of his 11-inch, and the 15-inch shells fired by the Queen Elizabeths astern of us are more than twice the weight of his 12-inch. We feel little anxiety for our turrets, conning towers, or sides, but we notice how steeply his salvos are falling at the long ranges, and are not without concern for our thin decks should any 12-inch shells of 850 lb. weight plump fairly upon them from the skies. By half-past four the German fire has slackened a good deal, has become ragged and inaccurate, showing that we are getting home with our heavy stuff, and the third ship in the line is seen to be on fire. All is going well, the enemy is outclassed in ships and in guns; we are still between him and his bases to the south-west, he is already becoming squeezed up against the big banks which stretch out 100 miles from the Jutland coast, and for a while it looks as if Beatty had struck something both soft and good.

But a few minutes make a great change. All through the last hour we have been steaming fast towards the main German High Seas Fleet and away from Jellicoe, and at 4.42 the leading German battleships can be seen upon the smoky horizon to the south-east. Though we do not know it yet, the whole High Seas Fleet is before us, including sixteen of the best German ships, and it were the worst of folly to go any farther towards it. We could, it is true, com-

pletely outflank it by continuing on our present course, and with our high speed might avoid being crushed in a general action, but we should have irrevocably separated ourselves from Jellicoe, and have committed a tactical mistake of the biggest kind. We should have divided the English forces in the face of the enemy, instead of concentrating them. So a quick order comes from the conning tower below, and away beside us runs a signal hoist. 'Sixteen points, starboard.' Sixteen points mean a complete half-circle, and round come our ships, the *Lion* leading, turning in a curve of which the diameter is nearly a mile, and heading now to the north, towards Jellicoe, instead of to the south, away from him. Our purpose now is to keep the Germans fully occupied until Jellicoe, who is driving his battleships at their fullest speed, can come down and wipe Fritz off the seas. As we come round, the German battle cruisers follow our manœuvre, and also turn through sixteen points in order to place themselves at the head of the enemy's battle line.

As we swing round and take up our new course, we pass between the Queen Elizabeths and the enemy, masking their fire, and for a few minutes we are exposed in the midst of a critical manœuvre to the concentrated salvos of every German battleship within range. The range is long, the German shells fired with high elevation fall very steeply, and we are safe except from the ill-luck of heavy projectiles pitching upon our decks. From the signal bridge of the *Lion* we can see every battle cruiser as it swings, or as it approaches the turning point, we can see the whole beautiful length of them, and we also see a sight which has never before been impressed upon the eyes of man. For we see two splendid battle cruisers struck and sink; first the *Indefatigable*, and then the *Queen Mary*. It is not permitted to us to describe the scene as actually it presented itself to our eyes.

Beatty has lost two battle cruisers, one of the first class and one of the second. There remain to him four—the three Cats and the *New Zealand*; he is sorely weakened, but does not hesitate. He has two duties to carry out—to lead the enemy towards Jellicoe, and so to dispose of his battle cruisers beyond the head of the German lines as powerfully to aid Jellicoe in completing their envelopment. Beatty is now round, and round also comes the Fifth Battle Squadron, forming astern of the battle cruisers, and with them engaging the leading German ships. The enemy is some 14,000 yards distant from us in the *Lion* ($8\frac{1}{2}$ miles), and this range

changes little while Beatty is speeding first north and then north-east, in order to cross the 'T' of the German line. We will continue to stand upon the *Lion's* bridge during the execution of this most spirited manœuvre, and then leave Beatty's flagship in order to observe from the spotting top of a battleship how the four Queen Elizabeths fought the whole High Seas Fleet, while our battle cruisers were turning its van. What these splendid ships did, and did to perfection, was to stall the Germans off, and so give time both for the enveloping movement of Beatty and for the arrival and deployment of Jellicoe's main Fleet.

By five o'clock Beatty is fairly off upon his gallant adventure, and during the next hour, the hardest fought part of the whole battle, the gap between the battle cruisers and the four supporting battleships steadily widens. If the Germans are to be enveloped, Beatty must at the critical moment allow sufficient space between himself and Evan-Thomas for Jellicoe to deploy his big Fleet between them, and this involves on the part of the Commander-in-Chief a deployment in the midst of battle of a delicacy and accuracy only possible to a naval tactician of the highest order. But both Beatty and Evan-Thomas know their Jellicoe, to whom, at few-minute intervals, crackle from the aerials above us wireless messages giving with naval precision the exact courses and speeds of our ships and the bearings of the enemy. For an hour—up to the moment when we turned to the north—we ran away from Jellicoe, but during the next hour we steam towards him; we know that he is pressing to our aid with all the speed which his panting engineers can get out of his squadrons. Beatty's battle cruisers, curving round the head of the German line at a range of 14,000 to 12,000 yards, are firing all the while, and being fired at all the while, but though often hit, they are safer now than when they were a couple of miles more distant.

We have now reached a very important phase in the battle. It is twenty minutes past six. At six o'clock the leading vessels of Jellicoe's Grand Fleet had been sighted five miles to the north of us, and his three battle cruisers—*Invincible* (Admiral Hood), *Inflexible*, and *Indomitable*—have flown down to the help of Beatty. They come into action, steaming hard due south, and take station ahead of us in the *Lion*. By this lengthening of his line to the south Beatty has now completely enveloped the German battle cruisers, which turn through some twelve points and endeavour to wriggle out of the jaws of the trap which they see closing remorse-

lessly upon them. They are followed in this turn by the battleships of the High Seas Fleet which, for more than an hour, have been faithfully hammered by Evan-Thomas's Queen Elizabeths, and show up against the sky a very ragged outline. The range of the battle cruisers is now down to 8000 yards, and they get well home upon battleships as well as upon opponents of their own class. We do not ourselves escape loss, for the *Invincible*, which has become the leading ship, is shattered by concentrated gunfire. The gallant Hood, with his men, has gone to join his great naval ancestors.

And now let us put the clock back to the hour, 4.57, when the Queen Elizabeths had completed their turn to the north, and had taken up position astern of Beatty to hold off the main German Fleet while he is making his enveloping rush. From the spotting top of the battleship upon which we have descended we get a most inspiring view, though every now and then we are smothered in oily smoke from the huge flat funnels below us, and are drenched with water which is flung up in torrents by shells bursting alongside. The enemy ships upon which we are firing are some 18,000 yards distant, we can with great difficulty make them out amid the smoke and haze, and we wonder mightily how the keen-eyed spotting officers beside us can judge and correct, as they appear to be doing, the bursts of our shells more than ten miles distant. Our guns, and those of our consorts, are firing deliberately, for we do not know how long the battle will endure, and the supply of 15-inch shell and cordite cannot be unlimited in the very biggest of ships. We learn from the spotting officers that all our ships, except the *Valiant*, have been hit several times while coming into action by dropping shots, but that no serious harm has been done. Meanwhile the shells are falling fast about us, and all of our ships are repeatedly straddled. The *Warspite* suffered the most severely, though even she was able to go home to the Forth under her own steam. This is the battleship whose steering gear went wrong later in the action, and which turned two complete 'O's' at full speed. Round she went in great circles of a mile in diameter, spitting shots with every gun that bore upon the enemy during her wild gyrations. Fritz began well, but does not seem able to stand punishment. He rarely hits us now, though we are giving him a much better mark than he presents to us. For we are silhouetted against the almost clear sky to the west, while he—and there are a great many of him—is buried in mist and smoke to the east. Rarely can our range-finding

officers take a clear observation ; rarely can our spotters make sure of a correction. Yet every now and then we note signs that our low-flying, hard-hitting shells—each one of which weighs three-quarters of a ton !—are getting home upon him at least as frequently as his shots are hitting us. Three of his battleships are new, built since the war began, but the rest are just Königs and Kaisers, no better than our Dreadnoughts of half a dozen years ago. We would willingly take on twice our numbers of such battleships and fight them to a finish upon a clear summer's day.

Our battle tactics are now plain to see. They are to keep out to the farthest visible range, to avoid being materially damaged, and to keep Fritz's battleships so fully occupied that they will have no opportunity of closing in upon Beatty when he completes his envelopment. We can see our battle cruisers some three miles away, swinging more and more round the head of the German line, and the enemy's battle cruisers edging away in the effort to avoid being outflanked. Far away to the north appears the smoke of the three battle cruisers which are speeding ahead of Jellicoe's main Fleet ; they are getting their instructions from Beatty's *Lion*, and are already making for the head of his line so as to prolong it, and so to complete the envelopment which is now our urgent purpose. Our Queen Elizabeth battleships are not hurrying either their engines or their guns. We are moving just fast enough to keep slightly ahead of the first half-dozen of the German battleships ; we are pounding them steadily whenever a decent mark is offered us—which unhappily is not often—and we have seen one big ship go down smothered in smoke and flames. The time draws on and it is already six o'clock ; we have borne the burden of the fight for more than an hour, though it seems but a few minutes since we turned more than twenty miles back to the south, and first gave Fritz a taste of what the Fifth Battle Squadron could do. We are slowing down now, and the gap between us and Beatty is widening out, for we know that Jellicoe is coming, and that he will deploy his three battle squadrons between us and our battle cruisers, which, extended in a long line, with Hood's *Invincible* in front, are well round the head of the German ships. The whole German Fleet is curving into a long, close-knit spiral between us and Beatty, and, if the light will hold, we have it ripe for destruction. We have played our part ; the issue now rests with Jellicoe and the gods of weather.

Everything for which we and the battle cruisers have fought

and suffered, for which we have risked and lost the *Queen Mary* and *Indefatigable*, is drawing to its appointed end. Our Fifth Battle Squadron has nearly stopped, and has inclined four points towards the east, so as to allow the gap for Jellicoe's deployment to widen out. Firing upon both sides has ceased. We have great work still to do, and are anxious to keep all the shells we yet carry for it, and the enemy is too heavily battered and in too grievous a peril to think of anything but his immediate escape. We are waiting for Jellicoe, whose squadrons are already beginning to deploy.

While the Queen Elizabeths wait, ready at any moment to resume the action whenever and wherever their tremendous services may be called for, we will leave the Fifth Battle Squadron, and, flying far over the sea, will penetrate into the Holy of Holies, the conning tower of the Fleet flagship wherein stands the small, firm-lipped, eager-eyed man who is the brain and nerve centre of the battle. There are those who have as sharp a thirst for battle—Beatty has; and there are those who have been as patient under long-drawn-out delays and disappointments—Kitchener was; yet there have been few fighting men in English history who could, as Jellicoe can, combine enduring patience with the most burning ardour, and never allow the one to achieve mastery over the other. Watch him now in the conning tower of the *Iron Duke*. He has waited and worked during twenty-two months for just this moment, when the German High Seas Fleet have placed their cards upon the table, and he, exactly at the proper instant, will play his overwhelming trumps. If ever a man had excuse for too hasty a movement, for too great an eagerness to snatch at victory, Jellicoe would have one now. His eyes flash, and one may read in them the man's intense anxiety not to allow one moment of unnecessary delay to interpose between his Fleet and the scattering enemy. Yet until the exact moment arrives when he can with sure hand deploy his squadrons into line of battle, and fit them with precision into the gap made for them between Beatty to the east and south and Evan-Thomas to the west and south, he will not give the order which, once given, cannot be recalled. For as soon as his Fleet has deployed, it will be largely out of his hands, its dispositions will have been made, and if it deploys too soon, the crushing opportunity will be missed, and the Germans will infallibly escape. So, with his divisions well in hand, he watches upon the chart the

movements of his own and Beatty's vessels, as the wireless waves report them to him, and every few minutes goes to the observation hoods of the conning tower, and seeks to peer through the thick haze and smoke which still hide from him the enveloping horns of the English ships, and the curving masses of the enemy. If he could see clearly his task would be less difficult and the culmination of his hopes less doubtful. But he cannot see; he has to work by wireless and by instinct, largely by faith, trusting to the judgment of Beatty and Evan-Thomas, far away, and himself subject to the ever-varying uncertainties of sea fighting. He goes back to the chart, upon which his staff are noting down the condensed essence of all the messages as they flow in, and then, the moment having arrived, he gives the word. Away run the signal flags, picked up and interpreted by every squadron flagship, and then repeated by every ship. The close divisions of the Grand Fleet spread out, melt gracefully into lines—to all appearance as easily as if they were battalions of infantry—they swing round to the east, the foremost vessel reaching out to join up with Beatty's battle cruisers. As the Grand Fleet deploys, Evan-Thomas swings in his four Queen Elizabeths so that the *Barham*, without haste or hesitation, falls in behind the aftermost of Jellicoe's battleships, and the remainder of the Fifth Battle Squadron completes the line, which stretches now in one long curve to the west and north and east of the beaten Germans. The deployment is complete, the whole Grand Fleet has concentrated, the enemy is surrounded on three sides, we are faster than he is, and more than twice as powerful; if the light will hold, his end has come. Although from the *Iron Duke* we cannot now see the wide enveloping horns, yet we have lately been with them and know them. The main Fleet in whose centre we now steam, consists of Dreadnoughts, Orions, King George the Fifths, Iron Dukes (all acting as flagships), Royal Sovereigns, with 15-inch guns, the *Canada*, with 14-inch guns, and that queer Dago ship the *Agincourt*, with her seven turrets all on the middle line, and each containing two 12-inch guns. Not a ship in our battle line has been afloat for more than seven years, and most of them are less than three years old. The material newness of the Grand Fleet is a most striking testimony to the eternal youth of the Navy's ancient soul.

We have now concentrated in battle line the battleships of our own main Fleet and six battle cruisers, after allowing for our losses, and the Germans have, after making a similar allowance, not more

than fourteen battleships and three battle cruisers. I do not count obsolete pre-Dreadnoughts. The disparity in force is greater even than is shown by the bare numbers, which it is not permitted to give exactly. Scarcely a ship of the enemy can compare in fighting force with the Queen Elizabeths or the Royal Sovereigns, or even with the Iron Dukes, Orions, and King George the Fifths. Of course he made off; he would have been a fool if he had not—and Admiral Scheer is far from being a fool.

Our concentrated Fleet came into action at 6.17, and at this moment the Germans were curving in a spiral towards the south-west, seeking a way out of the sea lion's jaws. They were greatly favoured by the mist and were handled with superb skill. They relied upon constant torpedo attacks to fend off our battleships, while their own big vessels worked themselves clear. We could never see more than four or five ships at a time in their van, or from eight to ten in their rear. For two hours the English Fleet, both battleships and battle cruisers, sought to close, and now and then would get well home upon the enemy at from 11,000 to 9000 yards, but again and again under cover of torpedo attacks and smoke clouds, the Germans opened out the range and evaded us. We could not get in our heavy blows for long enough to crush Scheer, and he could not get in his mosquito attacks with sufficient success wholly to stave us off. For us those two hours of hunting an elusive enemy amid smoke and fog banks were intensely exasperating; for him they must have been not less intensely nerve-racking. All the while we were hunting him, he was edging away to the south-west—'pursuing the English' was his own humorous description of the manœuvre—and both Jellicoe and Beatty were pressing down between him and the land, and endeavouring to push him away from his bases. All the while our battleships and battle cruisers were firing heavily upon any German ship which they could see, damaging many, and sinking one at least. The return fire was so ragged and ineffective that our vessels were scarcely touched, and only three men were wounded in the whole of Jellicoe's main Fleet. By nine o'clock, both Beatty and Jellicoe were far down the Jutland coast, and had turned towards the south-west in the expectation that daylight would reveal to them the German Fleet in a favourable position for ending the business.

(To be continued.)

FROM WEST AND EAST IN AFRICA.

BY A SOLDIER'S WIFE.

IN the stress of life to-day at the great world-centres, in the brave forcing-to of the door on all emotion, with bolts and hinges strained until one dreads another wrench lest it tear them from their fastenings and let loose the furies of fear and sorrow and despair, at such a time one can picture some soul oppressed and fearful, creeping perhaps into the echoing silence under the great dome of St. Paul's Cathedral—stealing into that perpetual twilight at a still hour that holds no music and no words to stir the hidden pain. In imagination one can watch with him and, listening, hear the great heart of London throb, and by the strength of those heart-beats know once more that all is well. But here in the veld, where life moves on so much as usual, where man goes forth to his work until the evening and the beasts to their ploughing and their pasture, where the very air sparkles with a gay callousness, there comes for us the need of something to stir, to set the pulses aching, to bring an anxious catch to the too easy breath.

And so it seemed good that Sunday afternoon to stand lonely in the dense crowd that thronged and overflowed the City Hall in Capetown. Each of us alone, yet drawn with vibrating strings to one purpose, held by one hope, haunted with one anxiety—in many cases with one enduring sorrow. And while we waited a man sang, voice and words electric: 'It is enough. Now, Lord, take away my life, for I am not better than my fathers.' The passion and despair struck home so keenly! Of what use the aeons of evolution, the growth of sociology, the brotherhood of man? The march of civilisation—leading where?

'I am not better than my fathers, now let me die.'

The music quivered into silence, and the speaker whom we had come to hear stood up. In that tense atmosphere it was an inspiring audience; we were as wax to be moulded, as fire to die down or at a breath to flame to devotion, to the last supreme sacrifice. And then—for me—the tension snapped. I had hardly noticed, in the emotion of the moment, the row of uniformed men in front of me, not until, at the speaker's first words, a distinct

giggle arrested my ear and an elbow from a small khaki-clad figure was driven home in the ribs of a tall lank sailor man.

'That's 'im !' shrilled a whisper, and my indignant frown at this profanity was disarmed as a beaming wizened face turned round—so sure was it of sympathy. The sibilant whisper rose and the face grew crimson with excitement.

'See 'im ?' with jerk of thumb and head towards the platform — 'that's my Colonel, that is.'

'Hush !' said someone, and the head jerked back to normal position.

'It is literally true,' the speaker was saying; 'I confess I cannot wholly account for it—that the South African soldier seems to have wiped out the words "grouse" and "grumble" from his pocket dictionary. Men under the most trying conditions of discomfort, of hardship, starvation, and disease ; men suffering from grievous wounds who have not had a full stomach or a dry stitch of clothing night or day for weeks, invariably greet one with a smile and a cheery lie : "Quite all right, sir," "Not so bad," "No complaints."'

Another dig of the sharp elbow, and again the irrepressible head was turned to us.

'Cup of flour was all we 'ad, some days, and no fire to cook it, but *we* never grumble. Wet to the skin day in day out. Foller 'im to 'ell, we would, cheerful, there *and* back,' and thereafter the elbow-digs and the hiss of the whisper punctuated the speech.

It was in the Rest House that I again met the wizened face of my cheery little Cockney.

'Am I goin' back, lady ? Next week, worse luck ! Black-water fever I 'ad, and malaria, time after time, when we was starving, but they're sendin' me back for all that, and soon's I get to Dar-es-Salaam down I'll go again. Never leaves yer, that fever, never gives yer 'alf a show, but what's the odds ? You get so that some'ow yer don't seem to care what 'appens,' and a shrug of the shoulders shifted a responsibility that was not his.

A little group sprawled comfortably round the fire. Capetown is a chilly place in the damp winter days, and the new Rest House, with its carpets and bright fires and deep armchairs, is a pleasant spot.

'Odd thing,' said the big man lounging on the sofa. He had got up at my approach, pushed a chair forward, and then thrown himself lazily back again, admitting me at once into the heart of the conversation with the frank absence of convention that marks this time when the one thought fills and stirs each heart. His eyes had

followed the shrivelled figure that moved restlessly from group to group. 'It's an odd thing the different effect on men of the German West and German East campaigns. Boys who went to the West—mere youngsters from school—came back as men, bronzed, stalwart chaps, hard as nails and fit for anything, so that people here laughed when they spoke of hardships and quarter rations. From the other side it was just the opposite. Fellows of twenty or so come back shrunk to puny youngsters of sixteen, physique ruined, nerves knocked to pieces. Yes, it is no wonder people are apt to minimise the hardships of the German West business, but for all that we had our share of suffering. God! it's a brute of a country,' he said with sudden heat, 'sand and drought and wind. Sand under a blazing sky, hills and valleys—all sand; wind made into a solid thing that rains blows on you and cuts your face and knees raw; sand in your food choking you; sand in your mouth and nostrils, stifling, driving you mad with thirst! I have seen the chaps on the lines running after an engine to catch the steam in their bottles just to wet their mouths; I have seen them tumbling over one another if we came to a water-hole, water poisoned very likely, or putrid with a dead beast at the bottom of it, but that couldn't stop them. Oh, I could tell you some tales if you cared to hear them.' He paused for a moment's glance around. There was a force in his manner that compelled attention, and eyes fixed on him in silence.

'Some of us were taken prisoner. Do you know what our prison was? A barbed-wire enclosure, with a guard who scarcely troubled to lift their eyes from their beer-pots, except perhaps to spit on a man who lay dying of dysentery. Do you know why? Because the Namid desert round us was a stronger barrier than prison walls. They knew well enough that if a man escaped he would die of thirst in the sand or be glad enough to crawl back for a drop of water and so be a good excuse for their damned sneers and brutality. The horrors of the place! You chaps say you've been starving—well, perhaps so, but I guess you haven't fought to drink the blood of the slaughtered beasts. We hung a little torn sacking on the wire and that was our only shelter, and the wind swept the sand through it and the sun rained blisters on us. Herded like cattle and almost naked, sick—some of us dying—and then knocked down and kicked by the damned Prussian N.C.O.s. Do you know the thing I felt I'd give half my life to do?—just to be able to get one of those devils by the throat and choke and choke the grin away from his face!'

The man's face had grown white. He gave a little apologetic laugh. 'Why do I talk of it, I wonder!' he said. 'And yet it is right you people should know before the day of reckoning. There were three prisoners who at last determined to escape. The others told them it was useless, but they were goaded till they couldn't bear any more. Better to die in the open than in that pest-house of horror. They saved what they could from their miserable rations, got hold of a bit more now and then one way and another, and with the help of their pals they secured three bottles of water apiece; and then they were ready to face a hundred miles of desert which lay between them and the coast where the British troops were! Shamming sick, they rigged up a shelter of ox-hide close to the fence, and there they were allowed to lie—sick or dead or rotting, it was all one to their gaolers. But these three happened to be very much alive, and as they were undisturbed they soon burrowed a little tunnel under the wire, and one evening when all was still they crept out into the first darkness. All night they walked their hardest, never sparing themselves; they sank over their feet in the endless sandhills, their breath coming hard and their muscles so soft that it was almost torture. You see they had to do this first part of the march against time, and daylight found them far enough from their prison to be able to rest and share a scrap of food before they pressed on again, always westward. I could never tell you half the horrors of the march, of their sun-blistered bodies thrashed with driving sand, half frozen when the sun had set; of feet torn and bleeding in their broken boots. There are no words. . . . They say nowadays that a personal God is a myth—and heaven knows it looks like it often enough!—and yet if it hadn't been for two absolute miracles there would be no more yarn to tell after the water was exhausted and the madness of thirst was on them. One chap got delirious and wandered off, and then it was that the impossible happened. There came a fall of rain—rain in a country where often two or three years pass without a single drop, or a cloud in the glaring skies. Those two were just wild with joy and ran around holding up their almost blind eyes so that the rain should trickle down their faces. Then they filled their bottles, and for two days they hunted backwards and forwards before they could find their mate, and found him only just in time too; but after a bit he bucked up and they all struggled on again towards the sunset. That seemed the one idea, and there was always that sun, a blood-red disc that floated in the air. It got hard to remember, and they would repeat it over and over in a queer sort of bewilderment—the

sun must be behind them in the morning and in front of them at night ; but then night had a red ball of sun too that swayed giddily under tight-shut eyelids and changed from red to black and turned them sick. And they grew weaker and weaker, for the last fragment of food had been eaten and the poor devils would stumble and fall in the hot sand. And then the second miracle happened. A sick seagull flew inland to die—they tell me that is what they always do—and it fell beside them. They grabbed it and just tore it to pieces in their hunger, and so struggled on again. At last one was beat : at each step he fell, and his mates grew too weak to pull him up. Help was near then ; and yet, God ! how far it was. They tell me it was for ten more miles of agony that these two held out before they staggered into British outposts. Of course the ambulance men had hold of them and were pouring stuff down their throats in no time, and presently one chap came round enough to be able to guide them to where the third lay, and I think the three knew little more till they were safe in hospital.'

There was a pause. 'Did they all recover?' I asked presently. It had been on the tip of my tongue to say 'You were one of the three,' but a look of fear had come to the man's face and I stayed the words.

'Yes,' he said ; 'they all recovered at last.' The man's pipe had gone out, and I saw the lighting match tremble in his fingers.

'What beats me is this,' began another man. The strain of the silence was broken, and we turned to the new speaker with a feeling of relief. 'In German West the Boches were unclean brutes to their prisoners, as we hear on all sides, but in German East they were white men. Of course the Askaris are devils, and I tell you it put the blue funks into many a man, the horror of falling into their hands—better to shoot yourself and die a clean death. But the Germans were all right—at least anything I've heard of them. There was poor old Tony, my half-section in the M.T.C.s—Jove ! that was an exciting day. I was a bit of a new chum up there, and the country, forest and all that, full as it would hold of every sort of big game, and the yarns some of the old hunters would spin at nights, just went to my head till I was mad to be out and doing a bit of lion-hunting on my own. Well, our Major happened to be a bit of a pal of mine. I had been best man at his wedding when we were both civvies, and it seemed awful queer at first to have to salute him and call him "sir," and he didn't like it either. He used to send for me on one excuse and another and yarn away when we were alone, about this wife of his that he'd left behind him.

Married men get like that sometimes, sort of soft, and he'd have done anything for me just because I knew her. Of course the chaps soon saw to it that it should be my job to get any concession or favour out of old Saunders. Well, one day my half-section came to me, and I guessed he was up to some devilment as soon as I saw him. "Dick," he said, "you heard the old man" (meaning Saunders) "worrying about meat rations to-day and talking about a kill? You trot along to him and say some chaps have just come in and report they've shot a heap of game in the jungle, two or three miles off, and they're afraid the hyænas will bag the lot, and can we have two or three tin Lizzies to-night and go and fetch it. Now, no questions," he says, as I was opening my mouth, "you just cut along and do as you're told, my son."

'Well, that was easy anyway, and Saunders said yes we could have three cars, but we must wait for daybreak, and on no account take the cars into the forest in the dark. I came back with the message, and Tony grins. "That's all right," he says; "there's a moon to-night." And he goes round amongst some of us and gives the word: "All serene, boys; 303's at eleven o'clock to-night."

'I tell you I was excited as we crept out of the silent camp. There was a bit of a slope, so we could run the cars down as quiet as you please before starting the engines, and then we seemed to rush right into the heart of the forest. We were on the track all right; but what with the trees thick on each side, and the black shadows and the curves of the road, it looked all the time as if any moment would bring us crashing to destruction. A mad sort of chap called Marsh ran the leading car, then came ours, and the chap behind kept shouting to us to go easy. He was a shocking bad driver, and we heard him come some awful bumps, but we couldn't go slow for fear of losing Marsh. Presently up comes the moon, and we could see the sort of dangers we'd missed, fallen trees, roots trailing across the road, rocks and great holes. But wait a bit, that was child's play, for suddenly Marsh swerves aside and goes crashing through the undergrowth right into the forest. We yelled to him to stop and not play the fool; but on he went, and there was nothing to do but follow. Jove! but the chap could drive—in and out of the great trunks he went, tilting, wheels off the ground, creepers tearing across the bonnet, shaving the trees till you heard the scratch of the varnish, and never so much as a lamp broken. But I'd had enough.

"Look here, Tony," I cried, "stop this mug's game. What

are we going to do if we smash up the car forty miles from camp?"

'So we pulled up and looked around—the third car was nowhere to be seen. I suppose they funked it and were waiting on the road. Next minute we heard a shout from Marsh, and we jumped out of the car, caught our guns and ran through the forest. Sure enough, the chaps hadn't been lying, for there, dim in the moonlight because of the shadows, was a whole heap of game, buck of all sorts and antelopes and some beautiful beasts that I'd never even seen before. They were in a sort of natural clearing which was flanked with dense elephant grass. Marsh had an electric torch, and he held it low for me to see the beasts. He was awfully bucked, and began to argue with his pal as to which he had shot. Suddenly he stopped short with half a word on his tongue and lifted the light a bit higher with a queer sort of shake in his arm, and then I saw what he was looking at. It was one of the buck, lying about ten yards away near the elephant grass, and as I stared I saw it had been bitten clean in two. At the same moment a shot rang out, and a hideous roar drew my eyes to the grass, and there out of the darkness I saw something flashing like two red lamps. My God! people laugh if you say your hair stands on end, but I could feel the skin creep on my scalp, and I'll swear my helmet must have been lifted, and my face felt all clammy and my knees shaking. Like the fool I was I'd put my gun on the ground while I was looking at the game, but if I'd had it I don't believe I could have moved to put it to my shoulder. In the silence it seemed as if all the jungle was alive and breathing, and I could do nothing but stare and stare just sick with fear, and those eyes never moved but stared back at me till I felt as if I'd never stir again. And then comes a great shout from Tony: "Steady, boys!" And there he was up in a tree a dozen yards away and his gun was still smoking. In a moment I was myself again, and I reached out and picked up my gun. A wonderful cool chap was Tony, and he must have been suspicious before we were and climbed up the tree to have a look around. Though it had seemed like an hour to me, it could only have been a few seconds, but still it was odd that the lion didn't spring, just glared at us, growling low like a cat with a mouse. "Fire!" yells Tony, and we all let blaze, and the lion gave one more awful roar, then slowly heaved over and crashed in the undergrowth. When we crept forward—jolly careful, you may be sure—we found the lion quite dead, and the mystery was explained. Tony's shot from the tree had caught him in the middle of the spine

and paralysed his hind quarters, so he could do nothing but lie there and watch us, and pray, I suppose, that we'd come a bit nearer. Well, we'd had enough of it. The game be blown! We weren't going to wait for the lioness to arrive on the scene, so we did a bolt back to our cars; and then we got another shock, for there, the way we'd come, we saw great flames shooting up. We just stared for a moment, and then we guessed what it was. Those damned Jackaroos in the third car had wandered in somewhere and lost themselves and been running round lighting fires to signal to us—fires, mind you, in a forest like that, chock-ablock with elephant grass, and to make matters worse heavy clouds must have been piling up for some time. We could see the moon scudding through them, and a sudden storm of wind shook the trees. Every second the flames leaped higher and spread farther. We yelled ourselves hoarse, and drove our cars as near as we dared to where the fires had started. Luckily we struck a bit of a road, and there was the lost car and the two chaps as scared as could be.

"We thought we'd lost you, and this blamed car will only go on second gear—don't know what's wrong with her."

"It was a sort of winding track we'd come to, made I suppose by animals going for water, and the job was to know which way to go.

"Aw, come on," grunts Tony, and swerves past the other car.

"You idiot," shouts Marsh, "that's not the way. We had the moon in our faces coming, so we must have it behind us now."

"Rot," says Tony; "think of the time we've been. The moon was rising then and now it's setting. I can tell by the stars."

"Tony had been at sea once on a time and thought himself pretty learned in the heavens, but the others wouldn't listen. They started to argue over it and contradict each other, and all the time the flames were rising into a roar in the wind.

"Oh, have it your own damn way," says Tony at last in disgust.

"Look here, Dick, you lead, and take those fool Jackaroos in your tin Lizzie. I'll bring on this one if the idiots haven't smashed it up."

"Hurry then," shouts Marsh, and the two chaps tumbled into my car and off I went.

"I expect all you people have seen a fire in the veld and know how it travels in a wind. Well, imagine grass ten feet high and a forest untouched by human hand, rotten branches, dead trees here and there, dry wood and leaves. I had thought the track we were on would soon run into the road we knew, but it seemed to wind about and dodge back again and turn this way and that

till I was fairly lost. The moon was hidden now in the clouds and all the sky seemed a lurid flame, and the smoke began to choke in one's throat. And then, just as I was all but in despair, the track came out on a widish road. I had no idea where I was and I couldn't stop to think. My only longing was to get out of this awful fire. I turned left, and then saw to my horror that the fire must have leapt across the road and I was running straight into a wall of smoke. Fear was let loose in the forest, and the wild beasts crashed on to the road and galloped madly into the smoke—elephants, giraffes, hundreds of small things, lions. But there was no need now for watchfulness: we were all one in our fear. I slowed down and turned my head. Marsh was close behind, and then another wall of smoke shut the two cars in. "Go on," yelled Marsh; "there's nothing for it but to race through." And I bent my head over the wheel and opened out. God, what a race that was! The car seemed to take life and go mad too as she tore into the great red wall. The flames whipped across the road and even singed my clothes. The heat of the car was terrific. It burned my feet, it rose in a sort of scorching wave to my face. Every moment I thought the flames would catch the petrol. One of the chaps that had started all this mischief had quite lost his head. He sat all huddled up and I could hear his voice sobbing "Oh my God! Oh Christ!" beside me all the time.

'And all of a sudden we were out of the fire belt, and if I ever thanked God for anything it was then, for straight in front of us the road ran down a steep drop into a rushing river. If the light hadn't come we must have crashed down that hill and been swept to death in a moment, for these rivers are treacherous things. You'll come along day after day and ford them easy, and then perhaps in an hour they'll be raging, impossible torrents. As it was, I had just time to hold up my hand to stop Marsh, then slowed down as quick as I dared and put on the brakes easy, so that we slid down and were just able to come round along the river bank. We were safe now, for the wind had as suddenly dropped, and the rain was beginning. I stopped the car and tumbled out, almost falling, my hands trembling with the grip on the wheel and my face, I expect, as white as the other chaps. There was no sign of Tony and the other car. I was scared that he might be killed, and Marsh and I—to save ourselves from blubbing, I think—set to and told those Jackaroos just what we thought of them. I can hear us now, our high-pitched voices shaking a bit at first, getting out one choice thing after another till the chaps fairly squirmed

before us. I guess they don't go a-Jackarooing again in too great a hurry.

'Well, that was the end as far as we were concerned. In time we struck a certain village and found we were sixty miles from our camp, and back we went in broad daylight, uncommonly ashamed of ourselves.

'From Tony we got the full particulars of his adventure long afterwards. It appears his car was going badly, and he had to get out to see if he could fix her, and at first he thought it was all up with him. And so he had more time to think out the situation than we had, and he realised that we were racing along *with* the flames, and behind him was the sort of very black smoke that comes from a fire that is smouldering. So he turns his car and struggles along a mile of road and, sure enough, gets clean out of the fire belt. Then he pulls up again, gets his engine fixed and runs along gaily, hoping to strike some sort of native huts or a camp before long. It was just grey dawn when a man seems to jump out of the ground in front of him, and he sees a group further on sitting at scoff.

"'Hullo, you chaps," shouts Tony cheerily. "Got any breakfast to spare?" and then finds himself looking into the muzzle of a rifle. "You are my prisoner," says the man in broken English, and poor old Tony's heart falls into his boots. But like the cheery old chap he is, he marches along and says how do, as if nothing had happened. Then the other chaps jump up, and he sees the black tea in their pannikins.

"'What?" he says—"have you chaps to drink stuff like that? Come along to my car and I'll give you canned milk and all sorts of table luxuries and a tot of rum into the bargain," and in two minutes, so one of them told me after, Tony had them all laughing and enjoying themselves like anything. I heard about it when the tables were turned and we had those Germans in our lines. Tony made them laugh so with his yarns, they said, that they made up their minds they would never let him go.—Which brings me back to the beginning of my story and the rum difference in a few thousand miles.

'But, Lord! I've been gassing for an hour and more: I hope haven't bored you all.'

My little Cockney friend was amongst us again.

'I can swop yer some lies 'bout lions too, if yer likes,' I could hear him begin as I jumped to my feet and ran to catch on the heels of flying Time.

SIDE-SHOWS IN MESOPOTAMIA.

AN ARAB CLINIC.

BY L. H.

ALL up and down the river I had heard of E—— and his Arab clinic at A——. So when my work took me within riding distance, I lost no time in going across to the village.

I had not met E—— before, but I found him a truly delightful chap. He is tall, fair, slight, humorous, has been five years continuously on active service, and wears a frontier ribbon and a Military Cross won at Gallipoli. He greeted me in a most friendly fashion, and cheerfully agreed to show me the clinic. So, after much shouting for it to come over and fetch us, we crossed the river in the only bellum the town possesses, and entered the bazaar. All the venerable Arabs sipping coffee and syrup in the cafés at the entrance stood up as we passed, which is more than they do in Amara. The interpreter, a Bagdadi Jew shopkeeper, joined us in the bazaar and we turned down a narrow street to the right, and reached the hospital, which was easy to recognise by the motley crowd about its door. It is a Turkish house of the usual type, with a central courtyard, partly shaded by the balcony running round the upper storey. The rabble filed after us into the court, at the far end of which stood a couple of cupboards containing the small resources in the way of drugs and utensils, and a couple of tables, one of which was used for operations. A bearded Indian sub-assistant surgeon was with us, but the hospital itself is left between whiles to two native nursing orderlies and a sweeper. Of course, it is practically all out-patient work, but there are several beds, and serious operations have to stay there.

The work was not long in commencing. E—— went into his own room, took off his coat, rolled up his sleeves, and then emerged, hatless and ready for the fray. The rabble seethed round, all wanting to be attended to at once, the interpreter vainly trying to get a clear tale of any one man's ailments. E—— waved them back from him, and threw his hands in despair towards the heavens with a look of infinite distress, in the best Arab style, which raised a laugh. Then he seized upon a wizened old Arab, from whose eyes cataracts had been removed a week or so previously, rapidly

examined him, and passed him behind to have drops put in his eyes. Other cases were dealt with in quick succession, and goodness knows they were numerous; hopeless glaucomas, glaucoma and cataract mixed, cataract not yet ripe for operation, ophthalmia of various kinds and degrees. He rapped out his verdicts briefly through the interpreter—'Hopeless; I can do nothing.' 'Later, I will cut his eye, and he will see,' and so on. All were satisfied but the importunate ones, who insisted on immediate attention, and went away quite happy so long as something was dropped into their eyes. The old cases were soon disposed of, and the newcomers, having restrained their eagerness far too long for comfort, surged up again; then all I could see was the head and shoulders of the slim spare figure, the face with an expression of infinite despair, and the arms flung to the heavens, while a throng of gesticulating Arabs, Jews, Kurds, and Persians surged round.

Once again a space was made, and the interpreter dragged forward a weebegone figure. 'This man say he have pain very bad in his belly, sir.' E—— looked emphatically sympathetic, and the patient sorrier for himself than ever. A few quick questions, an examination of the painful part, which turns out to be an enlarged spleen, the overlying skin with bluish spots all over it, where the Arab medicine man has applied burning matches—his sovereign remedy for all internal local complaints—and a gesture of despair from E——, who points to the stars. 'Arabi hakim?' 'Ai, sahib, Arabi hakim.' More despair on the part of E——, accompanied by Arab gestures, which are hugely enjoyed by the grinning crowd, while the patient looks more and more miserable. You know what a perfectly happy and healthy dog comes to look like if you keep on saying 'Poor dog!' to him with deepest sympathy in voice and expression. Well, an Arab patient is very similar. Finally, E—— claps the man on the shoulder, tells him, per interpreter, that he will be well in one month, and passes him back to be dosed, with instructions to come back daily for a repetition. They cannot be trusted with a bottle of medicine, as they invariably drink it all at a draught to expedite the cure.

And so the game goes on. Minor cuts and bruises and ulcers are dressed by one of the orderlies, who always has two or three people sitting round a sink at one end of the court, cleaning up their wounds under his instructions. Rheumatic old ladies and gentlemen are squatted down also, given a handful of ointment, and made to do their own rubbing. More serious cases are passed

back to the assistant surgeon for dressing. One man, squatting on the ground in a single blood-stained white garment—at least, it had been white—unwinds his headgear and exposes a sword-cut clean through his skull, stopping short of the brain itself, which can be seen palpitating within—or could, when the wound was cleaned up. After being dressed, he walked away on his own two legs as if he had but a slight scalp wound. Gradually, the remaining men are dealt with. A boy of fifteen, whose hands and feet are hideous with leprosy, though his face is, as yet, hardly affected, comes piteously and wistfully up, hoping that the great white hakim can save him. He is gently told that nothing can ever be done, and slinks despairingly out of the court. He has no heart to stay and watch what is a popular show to the rest. Quaint old characters who have already been treated for one thing cannot bear to see someone else getting something which they themselves have not had; so the old boy who has had a little glycerine and cotton-wool put in his ears as a first contribution towards relieving his deafness, immediately develops a pain in his tummy on seeing someone else get a pill for that painful complaint, and he cannot be pacified until he has had a pill also. Many of them would undergo major operations rather than feel that they were missing anything. A man with a hopeless cancer is told that nothing can be done for him, but presently the interpreter brings him back. ‘Sahib, this man says, Won’t you cut his belly?’ And it has to be gone into all over again. E—— keeps good-humoured throughout, smiling, chaffing, imitating their gestures, which are all dignified, by the way, and keeping them amused and consoled and comforted.

Just as he is finishing with the men there are giggles and chatterings and sly runnings in and out of little impudent bead-covered girls, many of whom, especially the Jewesses, are quite pretty. Then the women gradually enter. So far, only a couple of Arab coolie women have been in the court. Now the high-class Arabs and the Jewesses come in, all discreetly veiled. The Jewesses are dressed in pearl-grey silk gowns trimmed with gold bands, and wear funny black and gold eye-shades. They clump in, shuffling on their wooden sandals, or mince in, in cheap high-heeled European shoes, with their ridiculous youngsters dressed in a sort of French fashion. The girls who wear the costume of the country look infinitely better. The youngsters are dosed according to their little needs, the mothers have drops in their eyes or something for their stomach’s sake, and presently veils are resumed and they

shuffle out again, with a clatter of sandals on the brick-paved court.

Now come the surgical cases. A shaggy old Persian has been walking about the back of the court, or sitting in a corner, nursing and speaking words of comfort to a little emaciated boy of five, his only son. The paternal tenderness of the old chap was wonderful to see, and they made an incongruous picture, the bearded man in his high round felt hat, and the skinny dark-eyed brat, his little face drawn and pinched with months of pain. They had come down eight days' journey from the Pusht-i-Kuh, Mir Khan and his father, to see what could be done for the little sufferer. E—— came forward to meet them, and Mir Khan, who had already suffered once upon the table before I saw him, set up a wail of angry fear. But E—— called his name, with a mixture of gentleness and command, and gradually hypnotised him into quiet as one soothes a frightened animal. When he was put upon the table the hullabaloo commenced again, and the bearded father, the bearded sub-assistant surgeon, and the slim fair Doctor Sahib all bent over the tiny chap and soothed him back to quiet again. It was a strange picture. Then the merciful chloroform, and half an hour's tense work, and the father, who would not look at the operation, was called forward to see the huge calculus that had been the cause of all poor Mir Khan's trouble. He fell on his knees and made the gesture of kissing the hem of E——'s garment. He could do no more, for E—— wore a pair of things called Jodpurs, which are riding garments baggy at the thigh, strapped below the knee, and skin-tight down the calf.

A murmur of appreciation came from the circle of Arabs, Jews, and Persians who had been looking on from a discreet distance. Here was something tangible. A stone was something they could all understand, and their confidence in the great hakim was correspondingly increased. Little Mir Khan was placed on a big bed in the ward, and the next case came along.

E—— has them very well summed up psychologically, and takes every opportunity of impressing them. One old chap came along with a tooth which he wished to have extracted. I was surprised to see E—— put his finger and thumb into the man's mouth, give a bit of a twist, and throw the tooth to the ground, whence the patient promptly rescued it, and, wiping it carefully on his gown, put it away in his pocket. The crowd gaped in wonder, and looked at the doctor's not particularly stout arm, wondering what magical muscles lay below its surface. He told me afterwards that he made

sure first that the tooth was in such a condition that he could manage the trick.

This work which E—— has started entirely on his own initiative is of the greatest possible importance, and people now come in from places 60 to 100 miles away, so wide has his reputation spread. I went over on a second occasion to see him ; and during the afternoon the news came that a great sheikh had just come down from Persia to be treated. This chief, whose name I could not get hold of, took the Turkish side with his 3000 horsemen and had to retire into Persia. He had now come down under safe conduct, and word came in, in the middle of an operation, that he had just arrived, *per bellum*—the river boat—with two or three retainers and a couple of women servants. I volunteered to go down to the beach and fetch him up. So off we set with two orderlies and a stretcher.

The old chap was lying on a heap of rugs, the gaunt and emaciated wreck of a fine big man, well over six feet, with a hawk-like beak and eyes, and a long red (henna-stained) beard, showing he had made the pilgrimage to Mecca. Even to my inexperienced eye it was obvious that he was done. We put him on the stretcher and carried him off, the two troubled women following behind with the goods and chattels, rugs, cushions, cooking pots, firewood, &c. We stowed him in a summer room at one side of the court, a pleasant cool chamber with a fine vaulted brick roof, and sunk down below the ground level. When E—— came to see him, he was practically pulseless. His abdomen was all one knotted lump, some huge cancer or tumour that had been eating the life out of him, and he was not strong enough to stand operation. All this had to be explained to his red-bearded henchman, and the old chap was given morphia to ease his last hours.

I left the next day, so do not know how or when he died ; but even though he did die, the effect on the people who came with him, who saw that he was treated with respect, were told that if he had come earlier he could have been saved, and saw his pain magically taken away, will naturally be very great. Indeed, I believe that by his wonderful understanding and handling of the people E—— is doing a work of the utmost value and importance ; yet he goes on quietly with all his ordinary military duties, and modestly carries on his clinic as a ' little side-show.'

RULE BRITANNIA.

BY W. H. ADAMS.

'For 'tis to free the slave,
 Britannia rules the wave.'

Old Song.

'PLEASE, sah, a man is sticking to the flag-pole.'

The Commissioner rolled out from under his mosquito net, yawned, and stared at the fat little black interpreter who was addressing him from the doorway.

'What's that, Mr. Tetti?' he said sleepily.

'If you please, sah, a man is sticking to the flag-pole.'

'Go and unstick him, then.'

The Commissioner yawned again, stretched himself, and sauntered to the doorway. A short distance off stood a bamboo pole from which flew a tattered Union Jack, and to the foot of this pole a man was clinging. He watched the interpreter untwist the man, chattering volubly the while, raise him and point to the house. The stranger was a stout young native who appeared deeply dejected. He was in a dilapidated condition, his face bleeding from a cut, and his back scored with deep scratches.

'Who is he? What does he want? Why did he cling to the flag-pole?' demanded the Commissioner, stepping out.

The interpreter surveyed the newcomer with a very grave air. 'He says, sah, his name is Ashong, and that he is a slave. He is tired of being a slave and has run away from his master. It is said in the village where his master lives that where the white men are there be no slaves. So he said to himself "Even I will go to the white men. They can kill me, but if they do not I shall be free." So he has come, sah,' concluded Mr. Tetti, gasping in his earnestness, 'so he has come and attached himself to the flag-pole.'

'Oh!' said the Commissioner, rubbing his chin. 'Oh!' A cloud came over his cheerful face. 'Confound it!'

'His master, sah, is the Chief of Prang—a village a long day's journey away. He says he fears his master, who is a very bad man, will come and try and drag him back. He begs protection of the flag.'

'How did he get those marks?'

'His master, sah, flog him every day. So he says. Make him work all day on his yam farm and give him nothing to eat. Then

because he take a little bit of food his master flog him and cut his face. He cry for mercy, but his master say "No." Then he hear about you, and make up his mind to run to you. He begs you to have pity on him, sah.'

'Poor fellow!' said the Commissioner, looking down on the slave, who was crouching humbly in the dust. 'Poor fellow!'

'I have told him Rule Britannia, sah,' said the interpreter impressively.

'Told him *what*?'

'Rule Britannia, sah. Britons never shall be slaves.' And Mr. Tetti pointed to the flag.

'That was right. In principle, anyway. Take him to the kitchen and tell cook to feed him. Say to him that he need not be frightened. He is free now—for ever.'

When this was interpreted, the slave threw himself at the Commissioner's feet, the tears streaming down his face.

'He asks, sah,' said Mr. Tetti, 'if he is really free. He cannot think it is true.'

'But it is. When does he expect his master to arrive?'

'He thinks perhaps this evening, sah.'

'Well, take him to the kitchen now. Then go over and tell Captain Inglis I'm coming to see him, as soon as I have changed.'

The Commissioner's house was built of bamboos driven into the ground and thatched with heavy reeds. The rough canes did not fit together. This enabled him to survey the world without going outside, but to the passer-by he resembled a bird in a cage. The spring of the floor caused him to bounce up and down as he walked. Some boxes and chairs and a couple of travelling-tables stood about, and in one corner leaned a gun and a butterfly net. Affixed to the walls were the skins of a crocodile and a hyæna.

A hundred yards away stood a similar house. In this lived the Officer of the Hausas. Beyond this lay the soldiers' huts, and behind them the native village. The rise of the ground prevented further view on this side, but on the other lay a gentle slope finishing on the banks of a wide river. The little camp was the expression of the Government's intention of bringing the people of the Hinterland into touch with their up-till-now rather nominal rulers.

The Commissioner, having donned some rather shabby flannels, walked across to the Officer's quarters. He found his friend on the point of setting out with his gun.

'I'm going after that crane,' said the Officer. 'What was the fuss over there?'

'A slave—a runaway from Prang. Claims my protection—the protection of the flag.'

'H'm!' said the other, pulling meditatively at his red moustache. 'Then it's come at last. The great question!'

'It has. And in a form I can't avoid. I'm on the horns of a dilemma: to free the slave and make the country-side hostile, for you know how such news would run through the land, or to recognise slavery and go against the Governor's orders. His Excellency's words to me before we left were: "You are not to upset the people. As to slavery, you will not recognise it, but you will not interfere with domestic arrangements. You must exercise tact."'

'Here's your chance then. You will want it. Plenty of it. For of course everyone has slaves up here. What a pity the fellow couldn't have waited forty-eight hours! By that time we should have been well on the way to our next post, and he would have found us gone. What shall you do?'

'I shall keep the man and protect him. I have no choice. Suppose I gave him up and it became known? Suppose someone in Parliament asked if it were true that a wretched slave had claimed the protection of the Union Jack, had "stuck himself to the flag-pole," to use Mr. Tetti's expression, and had been handed back to his brutal master by a callous official? And apart from any consequences of that kind, I couldn't do such a thing. I'm very sorry for the poor fellow. He is covered with marks. His spirit is broken. No, I can't send him away.' And the Commissioner thumped the table with his fist.

'Very well. I'll tell the sergeant to look after him, and to keep an eye open for the master. Now I must be off or I shall be late. Come with me. Forget your worries in the chase.'

'All right,' said the Commissioner rather reluctantly.

The Officer picked up his gun, and they walked quickly to the river. A quarter of a mile downstream there lay a tiny islet, and to this islet there came every morning and evening a large black and white crane with brilliantly crimson legs and beak. This bird was intensely coveted by the Hausa Officer. But the islet was not in shot from either bank, and the crane was wary. This morning the bird was plainly visible—a little white spot on the blue water. The two men embarked in a canoe and laid themselves flat on the bottom, and the native paddler let the little craft drift silently down with the current. But at their approach the crane jumped lazily into the air, tucked up its legs and departed.

'I'll get you yet,' cried the Officer, shaking his fist.

Two large birds of the pigeon tribe, crested and of a metallic green, flew from a tree. They fell to a left and right and were picked up with satisfaction, for they were good to eat. Then the canoe landed and the Officer stepped out.

'The bird I'm after now,' he said, 'is a black bird with a red breast. It frequents a pool about a quarter of a mile on.'

'I'll wait here for you,' said the Commissioner. The Officer nodded and pushed his way through the bushes.

Left alone, the Commissioner lit his pipe. He was worried and ill at ease. The sight of the ill-treated slave, prone and clinging to the flag-pole, had made his kind heart sore, and he could not but recognise the gravity of the issues now raised, and the trouble which threatened.

Meanwhile the Officer pursued his way through the marsh. Birds abounded. By reason of his collector's keenness he knew this portion of the West African wilderness quite well. Presently he came to a thicket of bamboos, in which lay the water patch. He peeped between the stems. There was no red and black bird, but a painted snipe ran and played by the water's edge. He slipped into the open. Up went the snipe and was gone. With a sigh of regret that he had not shot it sitting, he lay down and smoked.

The sunlight came through the green bamboos and turned the pool to gold. A little animal, half squirrel, half cat, ran down and drank, wiped its face with its paws, and hurried away again. All was quietness and peace. When his cigarette was finished he tossed the end into the pool and sought his friend, whom he found still sitting meditating on the river bank.

'The slave owner hasn't turned up yet,' said the Commissioner. 'I've been watching for him.'

The anxiety which troubled him showed so plainly in his voice that the Officer felt sorry for him. 'See here,' he said, 'I shouldn't let this business worry you. We have got on very well up to now in every place we have been to. Why endanger the success of the mission? I don't believe these slaves are badly treated. Anyhow, it isn't worth having a row with the Governor—perhaps ruining yourself. Especially as we are leaving here the day after to-morrow.'

'While I was waiting for you,' said the Commissioner, 'I could not help thinking what a shame it was to treat people in the way this poor devil has been treated. Here's a country with food and room for everyone, and yet one man can't be content without enslaving another. Why shouldn't a man sit in the sun and do nothing if he likes? Why can't they live and let live?'

The other regarded him with affection. 'You've a heart as big as a bullock's,' he said. 'If you had your way we should have the millennium, or whatever it's called, here. But I'm afraid you'll have your hands full if you mean to hurry it up.'

'I'll hurry up breakfast, if I can't the millennium,' said the Commissioner, as the camp came in sight. 'We've got a special one this morning. There was fresh meat in the market, so we are going to have curry.'

'Good! The first fresh meat for a month. I'm starved. I'll be with you in a moment. Meanwhile you get the cocktails ready.'

The Commissioner ran into the house shouting for the cook, breakfast, and cocktails all together. There was no sign of any preparation for the meal, and no one was about, but a great noise was going on in the kitchen. In response to his roar the cook appeared, carrying in his hand one of the green birds the Officer had shot.

'Where the devil's the breakfast? Why isn't the cloth laid?' demanded the Commissioner angrily.

'Not ready, sah. Make it now,' said the cook, a long melancholy negro.

'What are you talking about? Where is the curry? What the devil are you doing with that bird?'

'Please, sah, it not be my fault. Soup, sardine on toast, curry with plenty rice and limes like you tell me, all be ready. I give Ashong the kettle and tell him to fetch water from the river. But he say you tell him not to leave camp. So I go, sah. When I get back breakfast be all gone. Yes, sah. Slave man Ashong eat it all up. I tell him you kill him, and that is why he is crying in the kitchen.'

'Well,' said the Officer, who had just arrived, 'that's a nice thing! All our mutton gone! Open a tin of tongue or something. It's past eleven o'clock. We can't wait for you to cook another breakfast.'

'And bring Ashong to me afterwards,' said the Commissioner. 'It's your fault for leaving him alone with the food. I don't wonder the poor wretch ate it. Tell him to stop that noise.'

In due course Ashong appeared, doubled up with remorse. It was all the long cook could do to induce him to approach.

'This slave man say, sah, that he is very sorry he do such a wicked thing,' said the cook. 'But he see the fine food, and before he could stop himself he eat it all up. He did not know such fine

things could be. He begs pardon, sah, and hopes you will not kill him or give him back to his master.'

'No. No, of course we shall not,' said the Commissioner. 'But he must leave other people's things alone. The Government will look after him and he will get his food. Did you not feed him?'

'Yes, sah. But when he see your breakfast he forget all about that.'

'It was very annoying,' said the Commissioner, after the reassured slave had departed. 'But we don't grudge the poor fellow a bite and a sup. He didn't lie over it, either.'

'No,' said the Officer doubtfully; 'but I wish he hadn't fastened on the breakfast to-day. We've had no fresh meat for a month.'

'I'll take him on as a carrier, then he can draw rations. I'm looking forward to having it out with his master. He must be a nice brute: he seems to have cowed the man thoroughly.'

'Don't forget to-morrow is mail day,' the Officer said, getting up. 'I'm going to take a snooze now, and shall do my letters to-night. It's too hot to sleep, though.'

Having changed into pyjamas, the Commissioner crawled under the net that a plague of flies made necessary. Despite the heat he slept, and soundly too. He was awakened by the sound of hurrying feet. The Hausa sergeant and one of his men came running up, shouting that a sheep had been stolen from the lines. 'And it is believed, sir, that the thief is the new man Ashong whom the soldiers are protecting,' said the sergeant.

'Go to Captain Inglis,' said the irritated Commissioner, wiping his streaming face.

'I have, sir. He says bring the complaint to you, as Ashong now belongs to the Government.'

The Commissioner muttered a wild imprecation. 'Go and fetch Mr. Tetti. Oh, here is he! What's all this about, Mr. Tetti?'

'Ashong is now in my house,' said the interpreter. 'It is true he took the sheep. He says he meant to give it to you because he eat your breakfast. He has it tied up. He will give it back to the sergeant.'

'See that he does. Then for Heaven's sake keep him with you. And don't disturb me, for I am going to write letters.'

Wherever the expedition might be, a mail was dispatched once a fortnight to the Coast, and it is to the credit of African doggedness that never once did the postman fail to get through, though often he took many weeks to do so. Mail day and the day before were days of great importance and were the only days on which the

two officials might be said to be busy. The Commissioner was hard at work when he was disturbed by a heavy sigh. Looking out, he saw Mr. Ashong doubled up with his head on the ground just outside the door, whilst beside him stood the cook polishing a pan.

'Will you go away?' shouted the Commissioner savagely.

'Ashong wants to say something,' said the cook. 'He wants to beg your pardon for stealing the sheep, and begs you will not kill him or give him back to his master.'

'I'll kill you both if you don't go away. Take Ashong back to Mr. Tetti. He has charge of him. Tell him if he lets him loose again I'll fine him a sovereign.'

The evening drew in. A coolness settled upon the parched land, a little breeze came up from the river. The camp became astir with the usual pleasant bustle of a West African evening. The cook lit the lamp and laid the cloth. The Officer's servant prepared his master's bath. Two small boys with much difficulty brought up a great jar of water from the river. The Hausas busied themselves getting their meal. The blue smoke from the camp fires rose in the still air. All were freshened after the heat of the day. Only Ashong sat by himself in the doorway of Mr. Tetti's hut, with a cloth over his head.

'Well, I do think he might have lent a hand,' said the Officer disgustedly, 'even if it were only to help those boys with the water.'

'He would. Certainly he would,' said the Commissioner warmly, 'but I told him not to leave the camp. No sign of the master yet. I shan't see him to-night in any case.'

'I'll hold him up in the guard-room if he does come. Ashong had better stop there too. He'll be safe among the soldiers.'

The night passed away in sultry peace without a sign of the slave owner, and early next morning the great negro who was to carry the mail-bags three hundred miles down to the sea, presented himself ready for the journey.

'Let him wait a bit,' said the Commissioner. 'Just fetch the account book, Mr. Tetti. I will give him his subsistence money.'

'Yes, sah. The book be in my hut.' And Mr. Tetti hurried off.

The Commissioner pulled a bag of threepenny pieces out of a box. Threepence a day the postman was to have, so he would want sixty threepences. Also five shillings to spend in the Coast town. Eighty-three altogether. It is of course easy to count eighty-three threepenny bits. The reason for the Commissioner's loss of count was his impatience and perspiration. He had just retied the bag when Mr. Tetti appeared, hauling Mr. Ashong along

by one arm. It was fortunate the Commissioner had finished his counting, or he would certainly have had to begin again, for Mr. Ashong, whom he had last seen clad in a dirty native cloth, was now resplendent in a suit of loud checks, a dickey, and a light old-fashioned bowler. In his hand he carried a collar and a Cambridge blue tie. The trousers were up to his knees, and the coat sleeves up to his elbows. On one of his enormous feet he wore a patent leather boot.

'If you please, sah,' stammered Mr. Tetti in a choking voice, 'I wish to report this wicked man. I take him to my house because you tell me to. I leave him there when I come here this morning. On my way back just now I find him walking about in these my clothes. He take 'em from my box and put 'em on and spoil 'em. All except the collar and tie, which he don't know how to put on. He get his foot into one boot, but the other break because his foot be too big.' Here Mr. Tetti held up the broken article. 'I catch him and bring him to you, and ask him what he going to do.'

Mr. Tetti gasped, and Ashong doubled himself up in apology so abject that the check trousers seemed in imminent danger of disintegration, and then spoke.

'What does he say?' demanded the Commissioner.

'He says, sah, he did not mean any harm. He sees these beautiful things in my box and put 'em on and go out and show himself to the people. He did not know people had such beautiful things to put on 'em. He begs my pardon and your pardon, and hopes you will not kill him or give him back to his master.'

Before the Commissioner had time to answer the camp began to buzz. The waiting postman jumped to his feet, the cook appeared with a pan in his hand, the Officer hurried out of his house and was met by the sergeant, and Ashong straightened himself and ran shrieking to the flag-pole.

The Commissioner stared around, and saw a dozen men coming over the top of the rise.

'The slave owner—the slave owner,' announced Mr. Tetti solemnly, 'and the master of the wretched man who is sticking to the flag-pole and who is in my clothes.'

The Commissioner waved his hand, and the disturbance quieted. The newcomers stopped and sat themselves down on the rise. The sergeant ran to the flag-pole and brought back Mr. Ashong.

'I shan't do anything till I've got the mail off,' said the Commissioner. 'Go, Mr. Tetti, and tell the Chief to stay where he is

till I am ready to speak to him. And then come back and help me seal the bag.'

In a few minutes the postman lifted the mail sack upon his head, and with a grunt of farewell set off on his long walk. When he was out of sight the Commissioner turned to the Officer. 'Are you all ready in case of trouble?' he asked.

'Quite,' said the Officer. 'The men are ready to fall in directly the sergeant signals.'

'Do you know how many men have accompanied the Chief?'

'The sergeant saw them coming. He thinks only those few we see. But if any more are in hiding we are quite prepared for them.'

'Thanks. That's all right, then. I propose to take the whole thing quietly. I shall ask the Chief why he has come, and then explain why we are here; that we intend to open up the country, and want the people to be pleased at our coming; that we don't want to interfere with them or their customs. In effect, I shall make myself as pleasant as I can. But one thing must be understood: there are no slaves under the British flag. On no account will Ashong be given back. I shall make that clear. Then I shall hear if the Chief has anything to say, and if he's impertinent or obstreperous I shall know what to do.'

'Quite so.'

'We'll begin, then. Mr. Tetti, put out the chairs, and tell the Chief of Prang to come up.'

The Chief, with his followers, approached, bowed, and shook hands. He showed no sign of truculence, but Ashong cried and shivered and crouched down. The Chief seated himself on the carved stool placed for him by his stool-bearer, and dropped his cloth from his left shoulder in the customary salute.

It was an impressive scene in that it marked a new order of things. On the one side the upholders of the old laws and customs of oppression, on the other side the white men with freedom for all. On the ground between them crouched the slave—the cause of all the trouble.

'Ashong is very frightened, sir,' said the sergeant.

'He need not be. I will protect him. Are you ready, Mr. Tetti? Very well. Now, what has the Chief of Prang to say to me? Speak slowly and don't hurry.'

'The Chief has come, sah,' said Mr. Tetti solemnly, 'to ask you to protect him from Ashong his slave.'

'To ask me *what*?' said the Commissioner.

'He says, sah, to help him against Ashong. The Chief says,

sah, Ashong be a dam nuisance and a wicked man. And the Chief asks protection against him.'

There was a silence, broken at last by the Officer's giggle. Then the grave sergeant chuckled aloud, the long cook sniggered in the kitchen doorway. Mr. Tetti, shocked at the frivolity, maintained his gravity, as did the Commissioner, while Ashong the slave scowled insolently at his late master.

'It be like this, sah,' said Mr. Tetti, after he had talked with the Chief: 'this Ashong was left behind by his party when they come to Prang from far away, because he be sick. The Chief be a kind old man and he take Ashong as his slave, because Ashong have nowhere to go and no one to feed him. But Ashong do very bad. He won't work and he get drunk and thieve, and fight with the wife the Chief gave him, and everyone be afraid of him. Then he run away and say he going to report the Chief to you for keeping him as a slave. So the Chief come to explain.'

'Anything more?' said the Commissioner, as Mr. Tetti hesitated.

'I have told the Chief, sah, Rule Britannia. That where we be there be no slaves.'

'And what does the Chief say to that?'

'He say "Thank God!" sah. Because then he need not take Ashong back.'

"And he showed them where his back was torn and scarred," hummed the Officer, vaguely reminiscent of some old song.

'Oh, yes. How did he get those marks?' asked the Commissioner, rallying a little.

'Ashong get drunk, sah, and fight with his wife, and she scratch him, and he fall down and cut his face on a broken pot. I think the story be true, sah.' And Mr. Tetti eyed the wearer of his clothes malevolently.

'I'll bet it's true. He's given nothing but trouble since he came to the camp,' said the Officer. 'He ate our breakfast, and——'

'He steal our sheep,' said the sergeant.

'He spoil my clothes,' said Mr. Tetti.

'Pull him up, sergeant. Tell him to stand up,' said the Commissioner. Ashong rose. His cringing manner was quite gone. He stared at the Chief and spoke in a very arrogant manner.

'He says,' said Mr. Tetti, 'he get sick of living with this Chief, who is a silly old man, and he hate his wife, so he come to live with the Government. But he doesn't like the Government, and will go back with the Chief and be a slave again.'

'He'll do nothing of the sort,' said the Commissioner. 'He is a Government carrier now and has drawn rations. He will come with us. See that he doesn't run away, sergeant.'

'But Ashong now resigns his appointment with the Government,' said Mr. Tetti.

'Resignation not accepted,' said the Officer. 'We've had enough of this. He's a carrier, and if he doesn't behave himself he'll take the consequences. By the way, I suppose his wife does not want him back? What will she say?'

'The wife will sing with joy,' said Mr. Tetti solemnly. 'The Chief, however, is sorry for you having to have Ashong. He says he will be too hard for you.'

'We'll see about that,' said the Officer grimly.

'Now before the Chief goes I have something to say to him,' said the Commissioner. And he made his little speech conveying the friendly wishes of the Government.

'The Chief says, sah, he will be pleased to see the white men in his country. The Government has begun well by freeing him from Ashong the slave. He would like to say good-bye now, and hopes he will see you again some day.'

The next morning the party mustered for their hundred-mile march to the new station. The soldiers drew up in marching order, with the carriers, twenty-two in number, including Mr. Ashong, in front of them. On such occasions the loads are all piled together, and each carrier selects his burden, which he cannot change for the rest of the journey. There is much competition to secure the lightest load. On the present occasion the load most inviting to the eye was a small wooden box. When the word was given Ashong hurled everyone aside and seized upon this little box. But it contained specimens of ore. When he found its weight he tried to snatch a load from a woman's head and substitute his own. This was prevented, and he incurred the first taste of discipline he had ever experienced. He performed the march tethered by a rope to a burly corporal.

He accepted the position philosophically. But he remarked to Mr. Tetti that on the whole he preferred living with the Chief of Prang to living with the Government, and that he doubted if the white men had the right to tie him to a soldier and make him carry a load. To this Mr. Tetti replied by telling him that all were free under the British flag, and by descanting on the good luck of those who enjoyed the protection of Rule Britannia!

WHEN K1 DOES ITS BIT.

BY A ROYAL FIELD LEECH,

THE LATE LT.-COL. F. A. SYMONS, C.M.G., D.S.O.

It was 3.25 on a clear morning. Dawn had not yet crimsoned the skyline. On top of the rabbit warren of dugouts, built in the chalk quarry where its Staff had taken up their battle headquarters, stood a little group of officers. Trones Wood had lately been occupied by others, and Bernafay Wood was already ours. The hour had come when, at last, for the first time since Loos, K1 was to meet the enemy face to face in the open.

It was a dramatic moment. The unprecedented roar of artillery at 'intensive fire' continued without punctuation. Flashes of guns, myriads of German star shells and Vêry lights, and here and there the lurid glow of a fire illuminated the heavens. To the left, an affiliated corps were hard at work with heavy artillery. On the right the French pounded away like the floodgates of hell let loose. So intense was the roar that from the Staff vantage-point the cessation of the barrage on the immediate front of K1 was almost indiscernible. It had lifted, nevertheless. After days of terrific bombardment the moment had come. The artillery had had their turn. It was the infantry's innings. Above, the stars shone with unaltered brilliancy. 'What fools these mortals be.'

'They should be off now,' said a G.S. officer quietly, glancing at his watch.

Nobody replied. . . . After weeks of patient waiting, K1 was in it at last. In the darkness, at that distance of several miles, nothing could be seen, but the metallic patter of machine-guns told a tale.

A modern battle is not engineered by field-glasses. Telephone wires in trenches and out of trenches carry the news. But although an anxious Staff did not speak, Master, standing beside them, knew full well that each one was picturing the scene behind Montauban with the eyes of experience. Little imagination was required to piece the picture together. The one brigade was rushing towards the village of Longueval and the other manœuvring to the right through Delville Wood.

For some minutes the little group stood silently thinking history.

Each, with his own job to be responsible for, wondered how those he had instructed and trained for the contest were showing up in this the crucial moment. And yet he had little fear. The enemy was but human, and K1 feared no man.

A message from the telephone beneath their feet was brought by an officer.

'The —— Brigade is in Longueval. The C.O. of the Royal —— is killed,' he read.

'Poor ——! I'm sorry,' murmured G.S.I. 'Any news from the other brigade?'

'Not yet, sir. I hope they are not hung up by barbed wire.'

'Not likely, after our barrage,' laughed someone.

Presently, on the left, a cessation of fire claimed attention. Some other division's psychological moment seemed to have arrived. Another rush for another objective was about to take place.

Dawn, accompanied by a slight drizzle, broke behind the enemy's line. The rattle of machine-guns was drowned in the roar of heavy artillery. What an awakening to the mysteries of another day of life.

'The South Africans are in the wood,' announced somebody bearing a second telephone message. 'The . . . Brigade is fighting from cover to cover in Longueval Village.'

'Bravo!' cried Green.

'Bon!' murmured Master, climbing down from his perch. 'The wounded will not have drifted in yet. The regimental medical officers must be hard at it. Now for some breakfast, and then off to the A.D.S. to see how things are working. There will be hundreds coming in before noon.'

'A' mess dugout was only a few yards away. A flight of steps led down to it. Cut out of the solid chalk cliff, with permanent tables and chairs, its walls lined with the material of which sacks are made, and supplied with electric light, it was by no means uncomfortable. 'B' mess, still in the Château at Etinchem, was too far away for breakfast.

There were probably dead and dying men of K1 lying out by then, but to panic on an empty stomach could do no good.

Barty at his official post at the A.D.S. had sent no word as yet. The carefully greased wheels were evidently moving satisfactorily. No news meant good news. A motor cyclist awaited orders.

For Master to move away from Headquarters too soon might lead to loss of an important message from the front.

The G.S. had mostly returned to their telephone. Messages could now be expected from all sides at all times. The holding of Delville Wood might be a matter of days. If the Boche was pushed out, his artillery would tear the place to ribbons. To hold such a place one would require to clear the wood and hold ground beyond.

To the uninitiated it possibly sounds incredible that the generalship of a battle should be conducted with little else than a map and telephone in a hole in a quarry. The British General of old, cocked-hatted, mounted on his milk-white charger, surrounded by a glittering Staff, while round cannon-balls cleave the air at long intervals, may still remain useful from the artistic standpoint, but for practical purposes he is as dead as Julius Caesar.

Presently Master received the message he had hoped for. The medical units were quite happy. The bearer party had pushed up the sunken road, past Montauban, and had opened an advanced collecting post in a captured German dugout at the north-west corner of Bernafay Wood. The infantry were digging themselves in in Longueval Village and pounding away with machine-guns. The regimental medical officers had formed new regimental aid posts in deserted enemy dugouts. In some of the latter the enemy had left food and wine in abundance. *Pâté de foie gras* was at a discount.

The dressing station in Bernafay Wood was approached by a short trench from the main Montauban-Longueval road. It was a dugout of the usual take-no-risks, German variety with a narrow flight of steps leading to the bowels of the earth. Bunks, two tiers deep on both sides, were found most useful for stretchers, and beyond the sleeping-place there was a kitchen. R.A.M.C. officers, with sleeves rolled up, paused but to wipe the sweat from their faces. Padre White, laden with mugs of bovril, was everywhere at once. There was no room for loafers. Getting into the place was an interesting business, but once in all was well. The R.A.M.C. stretcher squads plying between it and Longueval Village took many risks and suffered accordingly. More than one R.A.M.C. officer tried once too often. Many R.A.M.C. orderlies were killed or wounded as the day went on. Novices can neither sleep nor eat in battle! The old soldier appreciates the ultimate value of both, and takes them in small doses at proper intervals.

In the dugout all were fed and their wounds dressed. Severe cases were stowed away on stretchers and induced to sleep until

their turn came for evacuation. Slightly wounded, after swallowing some food, were started off on their feet towards home! Excitement had no place in the scheme of events. This was not a battle of a day, but of many days. Before the end all orderlies would be exhausted. Reliefs were therefore necessary, also compulsory resting hours. The workers had soon lost all sense of time. In the dugout day was almost the same as night. Candles and a few oil lamps burned always. The heat, the sweet, sickly smell of blood, and the groans of the dying provided atmosphere.

Below Montauban the railway line cuts the road. There it was that trolleys could be commandeered. Field Ambulance mules were also called upon to pull them.

The A.D.S. at Glatz Redoubt had been reduced to a mere post of call *en route*, where fresh bearers took up the carriage of the stretchers as far as the corner near Maricourt, to which the horsed ambulance waggons had ventured through the terrific mud and shell-fire.

Here and there a high-explosive shell tore up the earth and all things under the earth.

Shrapnel permitted of little nerve-rest. A serious case, under morphia, slept away as the wheeled stretcher bumped him over the ruts; another, his nerves on the rack with a compound fracture of the thigh, permitted himself to groan at intervals. Trudging alongside, the walking wounded, his whole body caked with mud, and his steel helmet sloped jauntily over one eye, smoked placidly, and thanked God that he was still alive and had his ticket for 'Blighty' practically in his pocket.

Montauban Village beggared description. What might have been left of it on July 1 was now reduced to mere pulp and powder. If any of its former inhabitants fondly imagine that one day they are 'going home,' they are indeed—poor people—living in a fool's paradise.

The walking wounded slipping past Montauban drifted laboriously along, down the railway, and up the muddy road to the A.D.S. at the farm. Once wounded, the soldier generally throws away all equipment and marches light. He also sees no object in taking cover. Providence notoriously protects drunken men and little children. To these should be added 'walking wounded.'

With the advance of the offensive the underground passages of the A.D.S. were now used only for sleep. Shells were few and far between. Operating tents, boldly erected above ground, were

filled with cases. Outside, the 'walkers'—officers as well as men—smoked and fought their battles over again until their wounds, in turn, were examined and, if necessary, re-dressed. While they waited they fed. There it was that the brace of caravans had, after many trials and tribulations, come to roost. Padre Johnson, with his satellites, stood on a doorstep and dispensed hot tea, cocoa, sandwiches, oranges, and many other dainties which T. Atkins loves. He had been up all night, but was thoroughly enjoying his job. Had the good donor of the caravans seen them on that day of victory, she would doubtless have not regretted her action in giving. Nevertheless, it is feared that their loss of paint and their general dishevelled appearance would have troubled her not a little. When the wheels had been greased who could say? Where the original crockery had fled to was a still worse conundrum.

Across the road the Indian Cavalry, standing to their horses, awaited the chance of a charge which might come at any time. They had been waiting for that chance for a year or more.

Within a few hundred yards could be seen the prisoners' cage. There were two barbed-wire partitions—one for officers and one for men. It was well occupied. The cavalry for a short time had ridden amongst the enemy's field-guns and captured Huns in mortal terror of lances. It was impossible to kill the few encountered as they flung up their hands and whined for mercy. Boche prisoners, when not being searched, were generally eating ration jam and biscuits, or, with their great boots off, examining their feet. Here and there a wounded one, his head in his hands, would be led across to the A.D.S. A captured colonel was complaining of British soldiers staring at him. The colossal impudence of his complaint was one of the jokes of the day.

The cavalry officers came across the road, looked, and rejoined their men. A gun of big calibre on the right shook the earth at intervals. It was asking for retaliation, but the Boche had other things to occupy him. The stream of lorries and motor ambulances coming and going on the road never altered.

The horse ambulances, loaded with wounded, deposited their cases at the A.D.S., and returned battle-wards for more. The stretchers, lying in rows, awaited their turn to be transferred to the motor ambulances, which would transport them to the Main Dressing Station, practically beyond shell-fire. The A.D.S. was but a post for the 'walkers' for refreshment *en route*. Having fed in convivial groups and passed the time of day, they attempted sleep. This,

however, needed watching, and was *défendu*. The stream had to be kept moving. Empty motor lorries halted at a signal, loaded up with 'walkers,' and rejoined the stream of traffic. The main 'post for walking wounded' was several miles farther back.

The scene at the A.D.S. was more than picturesque; it was wonderful. An unmistakable atmosphere of victory glorified all things. A man with a fractured arm readjusted his sling, drank some tea, and laughed out of sheer joy of heart. Another, with head bandaged, pretended to be quite fit and nearly fainted. Now and again T. Atkins, supremely self-satisfied, would stride up to a derelict wounded Hun, and survey him critically: 'Ere you are, you poor blighter, 'ave a cigarette?'

There was little pathos to be found amongst the 'walkers.' They refused on principle to cultivate it. Stretcher cases, however, were another matter. The shouts of the captains, the paeans of victory, the yells of the vanquished have passed away. Only a great lassitude and the shadow of impending death remain. To those who lie beneath the shadow of the tent while the noonday sun grows rapidly dim come thoughts of which we who are still left know nothing. It is these who for a few fleeting moments see life through the proper end of the telescope. Have they won or lost their fight? God alone knows.

Above the whole, covering Hun as well as British lines, shone a summer sun. Amidst the cool leaves of the trees the birds, unmindful of war, chirruped their songs of joy. For a few moments the Peronne road was almost as quiet as on a day of midsummer peace. Such lulls come sometimes. Then suddenly an ambulance waggon, shattered by a shell, pitched forward and came to a standstill. The driver lay dead across the dash-board, and the orderly, with a fractured arm, fled for safety. *C'est la guerre!*

In a hollow of the grassland bordering the Bray-Cortie road the motor lorries discharged their freight of 'walkers.' A Red Cross flag proclaimed the nature of the rendezvous. Notice-boards at all the cross-roads directed the stragglers. A series of marquees and open-air kitchens comprised the accommodation.

The 'walker,' quite happy, lay down in the grass and prepared for sleep until his turn came. It must be remembered that T. Atkins had gone into the battle at 3 A.M., and had spent some hours in quietly drifting on his way. He was, therefore, naturally tired. Having been urged onwards, however, by R.A.M.C. men, he entered the first tent like a pig driven into a Chicago pork factory. In

fact, from the moment he entered he became one of a herd who could not escape until they had passed through the whole course laid out for them inside the tents. First came a narrow passage through which only a single file of men could push their way. The clerks at three small tables captured the name, regiment, and nature of wound of each man. This passage opened out into a large marquee, where T. Atkins, dazed and dumb, found himself facing half a dozen surgeons in their shirt sleeves. Hot water sizzled, an odour of antiseptics permeated the heated atmosphere, and a general appearance of surgical torture advised retreat. Retreat, however, was impossible. Once in, there was no return ticket. His wound dressed, the victim smiled and followed the crowd. Another tent promptly enveloped him. Here another small army of surgeons, armed with hypodermic syringes, seized upon all comers and injected them with anti-tetanic serum. T. Atkins has been taught obedience. With a stoical grin he accepted the injection, and, by this time thoroughly prepared for the worst, again moved forward with the crowd. A gasp of relief escaped him. The good things had been saved until the last. The third tent contained nothing less than a great buffet. Hot drinks, meat, buns, and cigarettes abounded. The land of war is one of those places where money has no value. If things are there, they are free. If they are not there, no money can produce them. With stomach filled, and swelling into consciousness of victory and pride in his wound, the soldier next finds himself in a *char-à-banc*, or motor lorry, trundling along the country roads in the cool of the day. A bed in a Casualty Clearing Station, the first for many months, will probably be his portion before dark. The day is ended. Has it only been one day? It seems impossible.

In that first day of battle the wounds were wonderfully slight. Yet every great battle must of necessity bear its share of bitter fruit. The 'lying' cases, borne laboriously by wheeled stretchers with relays of orderlies from Longueval to the ambulance waggons, and thence to the Main Dressing Station, were more than enough in number.

The 'M.D.S.,' erected within the shadow of a copse, presented the appearance of a small village of tents. Marquees arranged in rows with cindered roads between them, offices, and operating tents repeated themselves in orderly sequence. Each marquee for wounded was numbered. A motor ambulance disgorged its freight and rapidly made way for another. When one tent was filled, the second in the row opened its doors. As the cases were dressed, or

operated upon, they passed into the opposite row of marquees, from where, in due course, the patients were drafted to the Casualty Clearing Station in ambulances.

A Main Dressing Station is a mobile unit. It must be prepared to be packed and away at short notice. To declare requirements so as to strike the mean between efficiency and mobility is none too easy. The C.O. with elaborate ideas may find himself left behind for want of transport. He who is easily satisfied with a sketchy 'show' may discover too late that his preparations for the rush have been futile.

An operating theatre in a London hospital may be no more efficient or its essentials greater than in a field ambulance in the middle of a field in France. To the patient, however, the surroundings are vastly different. In the former the victim has probably been 'prepared,' and his friends have visited him before his ordeal. Straight from the battlefield, his mud-begrimed clothes cut from him, and one of a stream of others waiting a lift upon the 'table,' he has no time to think. A languorous atmosphere of anaesthetics, the roar of the guns in the distance, the bustle of many men and waggons heard through the canvas, the click of instruments, a final word of encouragement from the operator, and without further palaver he sinks into a dreamless chloroform sleep. Eventually pulling together his scattered wits, he realises that he is on his way towards a bed with sheets and all the luxuries of a Casualty Clearing Station.

All night, except for acetylene lamps adding to the weirdness of the scene, the continuous work went on without a change.

The rows of stretchers in the tents, each with its bandaged occupant, presented many varied scenes. Courage, unselfishness, and pathos compete for recognition. T. Atkins never shows to better advantage than when in pain. He will share the last of anything with the man next door, and if he has to die, he closes his eyes obediently without a cry.

The battle, swaying backwards and forwards through the woods, was waged with terrific fierceness. The enemy, driven back upon Waterlot Farm and his villages, called for his artillery fire to devastate all living things in the wood. Then, assailed by the hail of metal, the conquerors were compelled to retire. Then once again the Boches, with stubborn intrepidity, would attempt to follow on under cover of their barrage until, met by British machine-guns, they were mown down in their hundreds.

'Pull baker, pull butcher,' is an expensive game, and must last

until one or other side is decimated. K1, once into the wood, was determined to either hold it or prevent the enemy doing so. That both sides suffered was only to be expected. That British arms would eventually hold the wood for good and all was equally expected.

The battle of Delville Wood lasted many days. It has now, however, ended for all time. A few sticks now mark the position of the wood. When in days to come the French peasant roams on a summer's day over what was once familiar ground, he will find many things of which he had never dreamt. Derelict weapons, accoutrements, and shells, and dead men lie beneath the surface.

It was the last night of the battle. Stretcher-bearers, as well as those who fought, could keep their legs but with difficulty. Sleep had been forgotten for so long that the actors in the great drama were hardly aware of the parts they played.

The Collecting Post at Bernafay Wood was calling for help. The night was dark and wet, and bearers capable of work too few. The dugout was accumulating wounded. Seven medical officers and ninety-three bearers of K1 had already joined the casualty list themselves. Now was the time to remember the Boche was tired too.

Some dismounted cavalry needed at the moment for nothing else gladly responded to an appeal for ambulance aid. It was true that they had never carried stretchers before, but what of that? It was a good opportunity to learn. A R.A.M.C. officer led the party through the mud of the sunken road towards Montauban. The young cavalry officer with his men had never been in action before. He was boyishly delighted with the venture. Taking one end of a stretcher, he put his sergeant at the other end and led his party. The road was becoming more and more dangerous. The Hun was viciously shelling with no definite objective. The medical officer, case-hardened, laughed. The cavalry amateur bearers were momentarily becoming imbued with a wholesome respect for the dangers and tribulations of the R.A.M.C. The sergeant at the tail of the stretcher was by no means happy. His young officer, fearless and with all his plucky heart in the work, dragged his N.C.O. steadily after him. 'You know,' he whispered to the medico at his side, 'this is doing my fellow a heap of good. He is new to this, and we are very lucky to have the chance of seeing something.'

The longest day must end by daylight. As dawn broke a wearied Staff snored in their bunks beneath the chalk cliffs of the quarry. K1 was relieved.

LORD MORLEY'S MEMORIES.

BY SIR HENRY LUCY.

IN his 'Recollections' Lord Morley makes no reference to his maiden speech in the House of Commons. I happened to hear it, and across the waste of twenty-four years retain vivid memory of the scene. In accordance with the chivalrous custom of the House of Commons, he as a new member had choice of the moment when he desired to join in debate. He rose immediately after questions had been disposed of, and, contrary to its custom of an afternoon, the crowded House remained to hear the new-comer whose fame as a literary man preceded him. It happened that after the interval of a night, he followed Mr. Joseph Gillis Biggar, who had been in the primest mood of his quaint unconscious humour. Fluent, self-possessed, never at a loss for a word, not particular as to its relevance, he chattered for a full half-hour. Next day came John Morley with his carefully prepared treatise couched in polished sentences gleaming from profound depths of thought. The House vigorously cheered when he rose, and sat in silent sympathy as he struggled through his opening sentences.

It was a striking contrast, not without a note of sadness, to think of Joseph Gillis saying nothing with easy fluency, and to look on at this embodiment of culture, this man teeming with great thoughts, this master of perfect literary style, standing with parched lips and strained eyes stumbling through recitation of his sedulously prepared essay.

On his entry into Parliamentary life Mr. Morley was handicapped by two conditions ordinarily fatal to supreme success. He was in his forty-sixth year, a splendid age, the very prime of manhood, but, except in rare cases—Chamberlain's was the most prominent—too far advanced in years for entrance upon a term of apprenticeship in that complex, inscrutable assembly, the House of Commons. In addition he had made a wide reputation outside the walls of Westminster, a thing interesting and attractive in itself, but not of a character to be maintained in the course of Parliamentary procedure. In course of time, by sheer force of character, he overcame these drawbacks, and took his place among debaters of the first rank.

The position was slowly acquired. From the first, he had in him

the gift of ordered persuasive speech, but for some time he could not be induced to let himself go in its delivery. To his ascetic literary taste the looser style of expression more fitting when addressing a public audience, was repellent. He found salvation in accidental circumstances. Called upon to address a Conference of Liberal delegates gathered at Leeds, contagion of their high spirits in anticipation of success at the coming General Election was communicated to the austere statesman on the platform. Cutting himself adrift from the trammels of notes prepared in the chilling atmosphere of his study, he talked to his enthusiastic audience in a frank, hearty manner which delighted them and probably astonished himself.

The speech was a marked success not only with a representative audience, but with the wider circle that read a verbatim report in the newspapers. He never turned aside from the departure thus made by chance. It was as if a man floating on the water, by accident deprived of his life-belt, discovered that he could swim very well without it. Mr. Morley never plunged into the stream of debate in the House of Commons with the boisterous joyousness displayed by Harcourt. But he improved session by session, maintaining his supremacy in the alien atmosphere of the House of Lords whither he was, to the amazement of his friends, translated.

Amazement is deepened when we learn that the change of scene and status was not the result of friendly action from outside but was due to the initiative of the life-long Radical and sometime scorner of the peerage caste. With habitual frankness Lord Morley relates how, shortly after the death of Campbell-Bannerman, Mr. Asquith, entering his official room at the House of Commons, informed him of his call to the Premiership, and asked if he had any views as to his own place in the Ministry. 'If you approve,' was the unexpected reply, 'I will stay at the India Office and go to the House of Lords.' 'Why on earth should you go there?' asked the master of stately eloquence, startled into colloquialism. Mr. Morley explained that he would better do his work, literary and political, 'in the comparative leisure of the other place.' So it was settled.

Seated on the red-leather cushion of the House of Lords, in comforting contiguity to the bench of surpliced Archbishops and Bishops, Lord Morley may among his 'Recollections' recall a description upon which he once ventured of the august body to which he has been recruited. It was, to the uproarious delight of his audience, embodied in a speech delivered at Manchester shortly after the Lords had by overwhelming majority thrown out

Gladstone's second Home Rule Bill. 'With the House of Lords,' said the Commoner of those distant days, 'you are dealing with a vast, overwhelming preponderance, a huge dead weight of prejudice and passion, of bigotry, of party spirit, immovable by discussions, impenetrable to argument, beyond the reach of reason, to be driven from its hereditary and antiquated entrenchments not by arguments or by reason, but by force.'

Lord Morley's 'Recollections,' by chance published a few weeks after the admirable Life of Sir Charles Dilke was given to the world, cover much the same period of time. They supplement the Dilke memoir mainly in respect of the vicissitudes of the Home Rule Question. Dilke and Chamberlain in the early stage of their alliance were Home Rulers. Dilke remained so to the end, though his personal interest more directly lay in the field of foreign politics. Chamberlain became the bitterest and most powerful opponent of his early creed. He marshalled and successfully led the Liberal revolt which destroyed Gladstone's first Home Rule Bill. He became the mainstay of the Unionist Party ranged under the titular leadership of Lord Salisbury, and thereafter, to the tragic close of his life, enjoyed the companionship and confidence of the class he, before finding salvation, denounced as those 'who toil not, neither do they spin.' Faithful to the last, John Morley fought for Home Rule and more than any man except Gladstone preserved it from permanent wrecking.

His personal relations with Parnell before the downfall of the Irish leader were habitually intimate. Parnell, who kept his own followers in the House of Commons at a distance they bitterly resented, unbosomed himself to the Englishman with rare frankness. I remember being in the Lobby in the House of Commons late on a night shortly before the O'Shea divorce case came into court, when Parnell, making his first appearance at the sitting, crossed the floor with rapid footsteps. Seeing me, he stopped and conversed for a few minutes. When he resumed his passage to the Library, Dick Power, the Parnellite Whip, asked me if I could tell him whether his chief proposed to take part in the debate then going forward. Considering the intimate relations ordinarily subsisting between a party leader in the House of Commons and his Chief Whip, this incident, trifling in itself, throws a flood of light upon Parnell's treatment of his followers when in the plenitude of his power.

During Mr. Morley's first term of service at the Irish Office, and later when he sat on the Front Opposition Bench, Parnell frequently

visited him, and conversed on current phases of the Irish Question. In violation of his vow never to break bread in the house of a Saxon, he even occasionally dined with him. One such occasion, it must have been the last, happened when Mr. Morley was staying at Brighton in the winter of 1890. As soon as his guest left, Mr. Morley made a note of their prolonged conversation. At that time the Unionist Government, buttressed by the adhesion of Chamberlain and Hartington, was tottering to a fall. So imminent was a General Election, and so certain of its result was Gladstone, optimistic to the last, that he, in consultation with Mr. Morley, occupied himself in drafting a Liberal Cabinet. Doubtless not without knowing Gladstone's feeling in the matter, Mr. Morley 'guilelessly,' as he says, asked Parnell would it be possible for him to accept the post of Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant? The Irish leader, without show of the amazement that would have filled the House of Commons had it known that such a dramatic turn of events was ever dreamt of, emphatically declined to consider the suggestion. A week later the co-respondent in the O'Shea divorce case was adjudged guilty by the Court, and Parnell's career as leader of a party that sometimes arbitrarily held the balance between British Liberals and Conservatives, finally closed.

This idea of Irish home affairs being committed to the care and control of an Irishman was not new in Liberal circles. Whilst still a member of Gladstone's Ministry Chamberlain advocated it. In the spring of 1882, when the Government of Ireland had broken down in the hands of Forster, he wrote to the editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette* (Mr. Morley):

'I wish you would openly advocate Shaw as Chief Secretary. It would be an appeal to the electors to aid in the creation of a new policy, and they might rise to the occasion. If they did not, at least the English Government would be free from reproach, and would have tried to rule Ireland by the Irish.'

A quarter of a century after this letter was written, a convention of representative Irishmen was seated in Dublin endeavouring to give effect to Chamberlain's dream. The Shaw referred to was an Irish Home Rule member who, after Parnell was ousted from leadership of the Nationalists, for a short time attempted to fill his place.

When Mr. Morley entered the House of Commons he was promptly taken by the hand of Chamberlain, who recognised in him a promising recruit to a party which at the time solely con-

sisted of Dilke. Friendship, political and social, existed for some years. It was severed by the lack of docility on the part of Mr. Morley, which in similar circumstances Chamberlain resented in Dilke. The member for Birmingham was what, to Charles Dickens' delight, by way of parting shot in an angry controversy about a fare, a cabman called Forster, 'a harbitry gent.' His ideal of a colleague and companion was realised in the case of Jesse Collings and Powell Williams, who were ready to follow his political divagations whithersoever they led him. They applauded his 'Unauthorised Programme,' and faithfully followed his footsteps when they led him into society and the advocacy of principles of which that historic document was the scourge. In conversation on controversial topics he desired in an interlocutor full measure of the acquiescence of Polonius in Hamlet's company :

Ham. Do you see yonder cloud that's almost in shape of a camel ?

Pol. By the mass, and 'tis like a camel indeed !

Ham. Methinks it is like a weasel.

Pol. It is backed like a weasel.

Ham. Or like a whale.

Pol. Very like a whale.

Morley and Dilke, closely drawn to Chamberlain by bonds of personal affection, susceptible to his commanding personality, were not of the breed of Polonius or Jesse Collings. When crisis was reached he accordingly, in letters curiously alike in tone, warned each of them that, howsoever reluctantly, he must terminate the intimacy with which they had hitherto been favoured above ordinary men. Towards the close of 1885 he was drifting apart from Gladstone and the majority of the Liberal Party on the question of Home Rule. Morley, faithful to convictions at one time shared by his friend, went to his constituents and delivered a speech which committed him to some form of Home Rule. Chamberlain forthwith wrote :

'I do not blame you for holding your opinion. Possibly you are right and I am wrong. But do not let us attempt to blind ourselves to the fact that on the most important issue which has arisen since you were in Parliament we are working against each other, and not as allies.'

Regardless of this solemn warning of the consequences of his action, Morley went his headstrong way, accepting office under Gladstone,

and playing a leading part in the desperate crusade under the Home Rule flag. In subsequent relations Chamberlain modified something of the implacable attitude assumed towards the rest of his colleagues who stood by Gladstone. But he was never again friendly on the old terms of intimacy.

After the General Election that made an end of Lord Salisbury's brief administration—named by Chamberlain, in one of his happy phrases, 'the Stop-gap Government'—it was evident that John Morley would be offered by Gladstone a post with Cabinet rank. How this expectation was realised is vividly related. Under date Sunday, January 31, 1886, Lord Morley noted in his diary :

'Was writing an article peaceably at home when telegram arrived from Mr. G. asking me to call on him at Carlton House Terrace at two. I got there to the moment, and found him at his writing-table, with no sign of fuss or hurry. He had to make to me, he said, an important proposition, and it was that I should accept the office of Irish Secretary. . . . In a pretty tense frame of mind I walked slowly down to the Athenaeum, had some tea, finished my article, noted down seven separate strong reasons against my fitness for the Irish Office, and went across to Mr. Gladstone.'

In the meanwhile, Mr. Morley had seen Chamberlain and communicated to him the great news. 'For an instant he changed colour, and no wonder, My going to Ireland was the sudden arrival of long-apprehended peril to a cherished private intimacy.'

I happen to know something about that leading article penned midway in the career of John Morley, leading him on to high offices of State, a peerage, and the jealously exclusive Order of Merit. My personal relations with him were in one respect unique. For a time he was my editor. Subsequently I was, *longo intervallo*, his. Whilst he was in charge of the *Pall Mall Gazette* he did me the honour to invite me to contribute a series of weekly articles on doings at Westminster. When in this same momentous month, January 1886, I reluctantly obeyed a call to the editorship of the *Daily News*, I obtained his valuable assistance as writer of the leading article. He was engaged upon what proved to be his last when interrupted by the summons from Gladstone. It is characteristic of him that, his world being suddenly changed, he looked in at his club, finished his article, and dispatched it to the editor with intimation that nothing more in the journalistic line was to be expected from him.

Particulars of Gladstone's final retirement from the Premiership

are related with full frankness. It is not a pretty tale, amounting to the hustling off the boards of the commanding figure that had dominated the Parliamentary scene for more than half a century. With the defeat in 1894 of his second Home Rule Bill, Gladstone began to talk of retirement. His Cabinet colleagues had, with well-concealed regret, heard of this before. This time it really might be true. Its accomplishment was hastened by an incidental influence. Lord Spencer, First Lord of the Admiralty, submitted naval estimates for the coming year which the Premier declared to be grossly excessive. The majority of the Cabinet backed up the First Lord, who literally stood to his guns and his ships. His colleagues, including Mr. Morley, were perhaps more insistent in support of him since, as the Chief Secretary put it in a memorandum made at the time, 'It would be against Mr. G.'s honour to remain at the head of the Government whilst the estimates of which he disapproved were actually being framed.'

One evening at a time when it was secretly decided that Gladstone must go, the only question remaining being whether action should forthwith be taken or whether it should be delayed by a month, Mr. Morley, at his chief's invitation, went to dine in Downing Street. 'Mr. G.,' he notes, 'not in his gay mood, but still perfectly cheerful and full of talk, only no flow.' After dinner, in the drawing-room the Prime Minister sat down to a game of backgammon with his old friend and faithful servitor George Armitstead. Mrs. Gladstone, seeing her opportunity, drew Mr. Morley aside and asked how things stood. 'I told her that the reign was over, and that the only question was whether the abdication should be now or in February.'

'What a curious scene,' the diarist muses; 'the breaking to her that the pride and glory of her life was at last to face eclipse, that the curtain was falling on a grand drama of fame, power, acclamation, the rattle of the dice on the backgammon board and the laughter and chuckles of the two long-lived players sounding a strange running refrain.'

The end, however, was not yet. Gladstone went to Biarritz, where he stayed for nearly a month. On February 17, there was a Cabinet dinner which his colleagues, every one of whom had found opportunity of reaching Cabinet rank bestowed by his hand, hopefully attended. Now or never! But the old fox was not yet run to earth. 'We ate our dinners expectantly,' moans Mr. Morley; 'the coffee found the oracle still dumb, and in good time a crestfallen flock departed.' Six days later there was another

Council at which Gladstone casually remarked that 'when the Prorogation speech was settled the moment would have come to end his co-operation with the Cabinet.' More delay. It meant that the Premier intended to hold office throughout the session. 'The words fell like ice on men's hearts,' the chronicler records. 'There was an instant's hush, and we broke up in funereal groups.'

But everything comes to the men who wait. A week later—what happened in the interval is not told—the last Cabinet of a series of unparalleled length attended by Gladstone was held. Lord Kimberley, as senior, was deputed to say words of farewell. Emotion overcame him, and his utterance was broken by tears. Harcourt, more successful in mastering his feelings, voiced the grief with which he 'recognised that the congenial task of lightening his beloved chief's toil was at an end.' Gladstone, who had sat composed and still as marble, closed the scene in an eloquent speech of four or five minutes, the sentences of the most moving cadence, the voice unbroken and serene, the words and tones low, grave, and steady. Concluding in a tone hardly above a breath, but every accent heard, he said 'God bless you all.'

History repeats itself. Probably a diarist, eye- and ear-witness, will relate for future generations particulars of the scene happening a year ago, in which another Liberal Prime Minister, long time regarded as indispensable, received a visit from his colleagues and straightway resumed his former status of a private member of the House of Commons. It is reasonable to suppose that the right honourable gentleman did not dismiss his morning callers with the benediction that, under analogous circumstances, fell from Gladstone's lips.

But though Gladstone, with his habitual magnanimity, uttered no reproach, he thoroughly understood the situation, and in his heart deeply resented it. Conversing with him four years later, Mr. Morley notes in his diary: 'Mr. Gladstone talked much about his having been turned out by Spencer and Harcourt—turned out of the Cabinet.'

A side-blow that assisted in bringing to a climax the fall of Lord Rosebery's Government in 1895 was dealt in connexion with the proposal to vote £500 for a statue of Oliver Cromwell. The Irish Nationalists, under the temporary leadership of Justin McCarthy, rose in angry protest. Prolonged acrid debate followed. The Unionist Party, perceiving opportunity of making an end of the Government, joined in the fray. It was evident that if the proposal were persisted in, this alliance would repeat earlier achievements on

the same lines by defeating the Government in the Division Lobby. In these circumstances, 'I had,' Lord Morley writes, 'the agreeable duty of withdrawing our vote on the specious ground that, in face of opposition so varied and apparently so hot, it no longer meant a really national recognition of the Protector's grandeur.'

News of this new danger besetting his former colleagues reached Gladstone, one of a hundred of Sir Donald Currie's guests on board the *Tantallon Castle* on her historic voyage to Kiel for the opening of the Canal which, in connexion with surrendered Heligoland, has played so important a part in the great war. The fact that his son Herbert, First Commissioner of Works, had charge of the project of erecting the statue, lent it special interest in his eyes. The more he thought of it, the more the subject possessed him. For fully a day he talked of nothing else. The topic came up when Viscount Peel, long-time honoured Speaker of the House of Commons, came aboard the *Tantallon Castle* at Kiel, paying an afternoon call upon his illustrious father's former colleague and his own old friend.

'And what do you think we talked about?' Lord Peel asked me when he left the state-room on deck, where for fully half an hour Gladstone had been fervently conversing with him. 'Why, about Oliver Cromwell!'

Lingering at the dinner-table in the evening Gladstone, reverting to the subject, expressed surprise that the Government, having carried the vote on account of the statue through Committee of Supply, should subsequently have abandoned the project.

'I am not sure,' he added, 'that, had I been in the House, I should have voted for the statue. I admit Cromwell to have been one of the biggest men who ever wielded power in this country. Though never actually King, no crowned monarch has exceeded the measure of his autocracy. The blot on his character I cannot forgive was the Irish massacres. The Irish members were fully justified in their opposition, and I drink to the health of Justin McCarthy.'

Which he forthwith did.

On March 2 Gladstone went down to Windsor to tender his resignation. Assuming that, in accordance with custom, the Queen would ask him for advice as to his successor, he consulted Mr. Morley on the point. Morley named Lord Rosebery. 'I shall advise Spencer,' Gladstone responded. Presumably advice was not sought, her Majesty losing no time in calling Lord Rosebery to the helm. On his return from Windsor, having kissed hands on his high appointment, the new

Premier joined his colleagues at an official dinner given by Kimberley in his capacity as Lord President.

'The meal was not convivial,' Lord Morley reports. 'We were out of a prolonged severe ordeal; and even those of us whose view of life was never to look back upon action that could not be revoked, may have mused over the chances of a future ordeal severer still.'

The difficulty was Harcourt. When the Parliament of 1892 opened with Gladstone as Premier, Harcourt's colleagues had, Lord Morley testifies, 'cherished every good feeling towards him.' As the senior, the most experienced, and, for Parliamentary purposes, the most competent of all the men sitting with him on the Treasury Bench, his succession in due course to the Premiership was naturally expected and in anticipation conceded. Now, when the contemplated hour had struck, they, fully recognising the obvious disadvantage of a Premier not seated in the House of Commons, could not agree to take service under him.

'How,' asks Lord Morley, 'came such gifts, claims, and work as his to miscarry just when the prospects of natural ambition were so promising? The short answer is that, though he was a large-hearted man, and a warm-hearted man, and a man of commanding Parliamentary power, he was daily liable to moods that made him difficult.'

So, as Gladstone had been dismissed, Harcourt was shunted. But his colleagues in the Cabinet now had quite another man to deal with. Lord Morley's gloomy vaticinations of what should have been the joyous birthday dinner celebrating Lord Rosebery's accession to the Premiership were immediately and persistently realised. The new Chancellor of the Exchequer grumbled his way through the short chapter of Lord Rosebery's Government. The Parliament was not to his mind, still less was the size of the majority; he was not sustained by enthusiasm for the main article of politics; he missed old stable companions and did not take to all of the new. He varied continuous complaints with frequent threats of resignation. Meeting Lord Morley at a party at Brook House given by that peerless hostess, Lady Tweedmouth, to celebrate the opening of the session of 1895, I asked whether there was any truth in the recurrent rumour.

'Well,' said the harassed Minister, with what for him was a rare burst of bitterness, 'if Harcourt doesn't resign very soon, the rest of us will.'

Harcourt, who, amid the petty friction of the time, had carried his epoch-making Budget of 1894, regarded these rumours with

grim humour. Talking to me in this same month of February 1895, he said with a big chuckle, 'There is hardly a night when I go to bed in Downing Street that I am not called up by the representative of some news agency wanting to know if it is true I have resigned. It reminds me of Louis XVI when, after his flight from Paris, he was captured and interned at the Tuileries. Every night, soon after the poor man had turned into bed, the mob, suspicious of fresh escape, assembled before the palace windows and demanded to see him. The hapless King, yielding to necessity, got out of bed, slipped on his dressing-gown, put on the night-cap of Liberty, and, popping his head out of the window, cried, "*Me voici, citoyens.*" Whereupon the crowd went home content. So the news agency man comes to me in the dead of night to assure himself and his employers that I have not slipped out of Downing Street by the back door. Meanwhile, *me voici.*'

In these conditions, harassed in his inner councils, hampered by the dwindling smallness of his majority in the Commons, Lord Rosebery gallantly carried on till, on a June night in the same year, came joyful deliverance by the agency of a puff of cordite ignited by St. John Brodrick.

Among the charms of a book that adds an important chapter to the history of thirty years are a series of vignettes of colleagues and contemporaries. George Meredith, Stuart Mill, Leslie Stephen, Spencer, Matthew Arnold, Chamberlain, Lord Acton, Earl Spencer, Lord Rosebery, Mr. Arthur Balfour, and others unconsciously sat for their portraits. Much has been written since his Cromwellian days of Mr. Arthur Balfour. Lord Morley's appreciation, though brief, is a masterpiece unsurpassed. To Lord Spencer, with whom he was for some time leagued in the government of Ireland, a statesman who fell short of attaining the highest distinction in public life open to a British citizen, he does full if tardy justice.

'No man of high social station or low was [he writes] ever more disinterested, more unselfish, more free from the defects incident to either patrician pride or plebeian vanity. Of no leading man of that time could it be more truly said that he was the soul of honour or that the instinct of devotion to public duty was in his inmost fibre.'

Like the chest of drawers in the poet's room described by Goldsmith, this passage 'contrives a double debt to pay.' It portrays Lord Spencer to the life; it is with equal faithfulness applicable to the character of Lord Morley, habitually reserved, revealed under fuller light in these two portly volumes.

EXPERTS AND THE CONDUCT OF THE WAR.

BY MAJOR-GENERAL SIR GEORGE ASTON, K.C.B.

THE difficulty of devising a system to enable us to conduct warlike operations successfully did not escape attention in time of peace, and some of our most eminent statesmen went so far as to say that the problem was insoluble. There has never been any hesitation about entrusting to admirals and generals full responsibility for tactics—handling fleets or armies when in contact with the enemy's forces—but so far they have not in theory, as far as we know, been entrusted with full responsibility for strategy—the distribution and movement of the forces in the whole theatre of war.

Unless the strategical control of our forces is kept in the right hands there is little prospect of our bringing any war to a successful conclusion, and this must be my excuse for putting forward a few suggestions, based upon a careful study of the data which have so far been placed before us by statesmen, publicists, and Royal Commissioners during the present war.

Strategy, as understood by experts, is a very simple art in theory. You must make up your mind quite clearly about what you mean to strike at. This is called by strategists the 'objective.' You must time your blows well, strike only one blow at a time, and put all available force into it. You cannot possibly be too strong at the decisive point. You should not divert from it any force whatever unless you can thereby induce your enemy to divert a stronger force, and so make him relatively weaker where you mean to smash him. You cannot overthrow your enemy unless you defeat his armed forces, and these are therefore the principal 'objectives.'

Strategical operations may be divided into two classes—those intended to win the war and those intended to influence the terms of peace. For example, in 1898, the combined operations by the United States forces against Cervera's fleet come under the first heading, the occupation of Porto Rico under the second. In 1894-5, the Japanese operations against the Chinese fleet in the sea battle of Yalu, their combined operations against it at Wei-Hai-Wei, and their land operations against the Chinese army in Korea and Manchuria come under the first, and the occupation of the Pescadores Islands under the second heading.

In 1904-5 their strategy was similar. They attacked the Russian fleets and armies in order to win the war, and they occupied Saghalien to influence the terms of peace. Winning the war being the chief object, it is clearly very risky to divert any forces from it to try to influence the terms of peace until success in the main operations has been ensured. Failure there means failure everywhere.

While simple enough in theory, many difficulties arise as soon as you try to put theory into practice, and strategists are judged by the extent to which they overcome the difficulties and achieve success. Friction is known to be one of the most important factors in any war machine. It is very important to decide whether admirals and generals, who have hitherto been officially recognised only as 'advisers,' are likely to be the best strategists, and therefore to be entrusted with responsibility, defined as 'power to act and liability to be called to account.'

I propose first to seek guidance from experience of our own strategy early in the war, as applied to Turkey in the Dardanelles and Mesopotamia, and in doing so I hope to avoid disinterring any old controversies or personalities.

It was unfortunate that the debate in the House of Commons on the First Report of the Dardanelles Commission was conducted almost entirely on personal lines. There are valuable lessons to be learned from the report, and also from that of the Mesopotamia Commission. The Dardanelles debate took place on March 20, 1917. Only one member called attention to the lessons to be learned for future guidance; and his speech was delivered to an almost empty House. It was not reported in the Press on the following day. The Commissioners took very much the same personal line as the House of Commons. They contented themselves with reciting the facts about our higher organisation for the conduct of warfare, which they described as having been 'clumsy and inefficient' for the first four months. They made no constructive suggestions for preventing the continuance of the system so described, and left readers of the report to draw their own conclusions.

Let us pass over the 'clumsy and inefficient' period in 1914, and begin at January 1915. The references in brackets are to the First Report of the Dardanelles Commission (Cd. 8490). The letter A. signifies the main report, B. represents Mr. Roch's minority report, and C. refers to explanations furnished by Mr. Asquith in the House of Commons debate of March 20.

On January 3, 1915, we were committed by the Secretary of State for War personally (A. para. 50) to a strategic diversion of force to make a demonstration, intended to relieve the pressure of the Turkish army upon the Russians in the Caucasus. We had no military forces available for the purpose (A. 52), and on January 13 the Admiralty received an order from the War Council to prepare 'to bombard and take (*sic*) the Gallipoli peninsula, with Constantinople as the objective' (A. 69). Comment on the wording of this order is superfluous, but the impossibility of its execution by forces under the control of the Admiralty escaped the attention of all responsible authorities at the time. Instead of only 'preparing' to perform this task, the Admiralty took such steps (A. 86 (8)) as to force the War Council into further action, and on January 28 it was decided, against the advice of the First Sea Lord, submitted in writing to the Prime Minister (A. 83-5, 87, 93; B. 22 (2)), to proceed with the operation, on the plea that things had gone too far (A. 86 (4)).

When referring to the Dardanelles it is important not to confuse the wide channel, between the southern extremity of the Gallipoli peninsula and the mainland, with the Dardanelles proper—the tortuous channel opposite Chanak, where the sea is confined between narrow limits and a swift current always sets outwards, delaying incoming vessels and adding to their difficulties of navigation. The narrow Dardanelles channel was known to be mined and defended by locomotive torpedoes that could be launched from concealed positions on shore. There were many formidable forts, besides concealed fixed and mobile batteries with guns bearing on the channel. The minefields and torpedo batteries could not be destroyed until the forts and batteries protecting them had been permanently silenced. Until these two operations had been carried out successfully the channel could not be used by war vessels, or by storeships and transports. There was a hostile army of unknown strength available on the spot for the defence of these forts and batteries on the land side; the strength of that army was subsequently estimated at 300,000 (A. 118, p. 40). There were also hostile war vessels which could operate from positions screened by high land, and concentrate their fire on narrow turns in the channel, where attacking ships must proceed slowly against the strong outgoing current. This digression has been necessary in order to understand what follows.

The exact nature of the operations decided upon by the War

Council on January 28 does not seem to have been disclosed in any further orders issued to the Admiralty, but, as far as can be gathered from other sources, the intention seems to have been for a fleet somehow to force its way through the Narrows, without any assistance from the army, in the hope that, once it was in the Sea of Marmora, there would for some reason be a revolution in Turkey (A. 94). Preparations for an attempt to pass a fleet through were proceeded with accordingly. No method of defending the line of communication for storeships and for transports through the defended channel after the passage of the fleet seems to have been considered.

The next step, the most momentous step of all, was taken on February 16, not by the War Council, but by some members of the Cabinet, whose names have not been disclosed (A. 96). The Secretary of State for War, Lord Kitchener, does not seem to have been one of them (C.). These Ministers, apparently without consulting the Chief of the Imperial General Staff and the First Sea Lord of the Admiralty, decided to move troops to the spot (A. 96). The Navy failed to carry out their task unaided, and it was ultimately decided to use these, and many other troops, to help in the operations (A. 117 (10)). The purely naval operation failed with heavy loss in ships and men. The scheme subsequently developed into a major operation of war which required the strategic diversion of a large army and a large store of munitions sorely needed for the main offensive on the Western Front in Europe. This main offensive had been sanctioned by the War Council on the same day (January 13) that they issued their official order to the Admiralty (B. 18). The full numbers of casualties have not been disclosed. Including killed, wounded, prisoners, and sick, they probably reached a total of over 300,000. One division, the 29th, was diverted from the main offensive (A. 96) in face of the strongest opposition from Marshals Joffre and French (C.) and the reluctance of Lord Kitchener (A. 101), who at first countermanded the order, and spare troops from Egypt were not utilised for what, at the time, was the most important operation (B. 18 (7)).

We can deduce from the above that, up to February 1915, admirals and generals had little or no responsibility for the strategic control of our forces ('power to act, and liability to be called to account'). This control was exercised by a War Council which they only attended as advisers (C.). On February 16 some Ministers, meeting informally (A. 96), took the control

out of the hands of the War Council, and came to a momentous decision, upon which action was taken. From that date until March 19 control was resumed by the War Council, with occasional reversion to Cabinet control (C.). After March 19 the Cabinet of twenty-two members seems to have again taken over control of the strategy of the war (C.).

We can now turn to the report of the Mesopotamia Commissioners. They attribute the responsibility for that diversion of force to the Secretary of State for India, 'who controlled the policy,' (Cd. 8610, p. 111), and they came to the conclusion that it was a 'justifiable military enterprise,' although 'the scope of the objective (*sic*) of the expedition was never sufficiently defined in advance' (*ibid.*). It is difficult to understand what the expression 'scope of the objective' is intended to signify. Does it mean 'object'? if so, why did they not write 'the object of the expedition,' &c. &c.? Or does it mean 'objective'? if so, why did they not write 'the objective against which the expeditionary force was directed,' &c. &c.? This resembles a passage in 'Alice in Wonderland':

'The Mock Turtle. "No wise fish would go anywhere without a porpoise." "Wouldn't it really?" said Alice, in a tone of great surprise. "Of course not," said the Mock Turtle. "Why, if a fish came to me, and told me he was going a journey, I should say 'With what porpoise?' " "Don't you mean 'purpose'?" said Alice,' &c.

For our own purpose, it suffices for us to note that the various authorities for controlling our strategy in the Dardanelles example directed a fleet against 'Constantinople' as its strategical objective, and that the authority for control of policy in the Mesopotamia example (Secretary for India) did not properly define in advance the objective against which the forces employed in that campaign were directed. These are valuable lessons. A fleet was given a purely geographical objective, and an army was given no sufficiently defined objective at all. It is clear that the system of strategic control of our forces in war was in need of amendment, and in order to make more effective use of 'experts,'¹ Sir Thomas Mackenzie, who signed the report of the Dardanelles Commission, appended to his signature a constructive proposal that 'The Chief of the Staff and the First Sea Lord should be

¹ An expression which applies to specialists in various branches of science and industry, rather than to those who handle the vast human and material forces and psychological problems involved in war strategy.

appointed members of the War Committee.' I take this to mean that the First Sea Lord, who is now called the Chief of the Naval Staff, and the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, should be responsible members, and not merely 'advisers,' of any Committee, Council, or Cabinet, or other organisation charged with the strategic employment of fleet or army. Let us examine this proposal. In doing so let us distinguish between the daily conduct of operations, issuing orders for movements in accordance with the plan, and the preparation, sanction, and general instructions for the strategical plan itself.

The daily conduct of operations of war was entrusted in 1915 to the Ministers responsible for the Army and Navy, in constant consultation with the Prime Minister (C.). The seamen and soldiers were not trusted officially with this work, excepting in so far as the Ministers thought fit to depute their own responsibility. In April 1917 an announcement appeared in the *Gazette* that the military 'expert,' the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, would in future be responsible for issuing the orders of the Government in regard to military operations. This transferred some responsibility from the Secretary of State for War to the soldier, who was thus put directly in official communication with the Prime Minister.

As far as can be gathered, there has been no corresponding change at the Admiralty, and responsibility for the daily conduct of operations at sea still rests theoretically with the Minister, the First Lord, as it did in 1915, and not with the seaman. The Navy is one of the most conservative of all our institutions. The wonderful strategical dispositions that led up to the battle of Trafalgar were the work of the First Lord of the day, and the system has survived. But Lord Barham, the First Lord in 1805, was an expert seaman, and one of the best sea strategists that the world has known. While the responsibility still rests in theory upon the First Lord, the last two statesmen who have held that office announced that they would leave the seamen a free hand. Sir Eric Geddes said, as soon as he took over the office, 'The last thing that I should do is to interfere in naval strategy. My time in France has taught me that it is best to leave the tactics and strategy to the professional soldier and sailor, and I intend to do so.'¹

The present situation is therefore that the daily conduct of military operations is entrusted to an 'expert,' the Chief of the

¹ *The Times*, July 30, 1917.

Imperial General Staff, by Order in Council, and the daily conduct of naval operations can also by courtesy be entrusted to an 'expert,' the Chief of the Naval Staff, but only at the discretion of the First Lord. If we can judge by the cheers with which Sir Eric Geddes' announcement was received, the nation would be glad to see this arrangement made permanent by Order in Council.

But the daily conduct of operations must depend upon the general strategy. It is therefore even more important to study the responsibility of admirals and generals for general strategical plans than for the daily orders issued for their execution. It is a difficult problem. If it were a purely military question, there is no doubt that, whatever may be done in time of peace, the best results in war would be obtained by handing over to an expert soldier the full responsibility both for the inception and for the execution of the military plan of campaign, giving him full 'power to act,' judging him by results, and 'calling him to account' if he did not make the most effective use of the resources placed at his disposal. But it can never be a purely military question; the naval aspects of a plan must also be considered. With us they dominate the situation. Finance, economics, manpower, the spirit of the nation, and other similar conditions must influence all military strategy. Also co-operation with Allies. For these reasons the authority for co-ordinating all these matters, the executive Government, must retain full responsibility for approving the plan of operations.

Again, if it were purely a naval question, it would be easy to solve the problem. Some day Sky strategy may dominate the issues of wars, and airmen will decide in a few days a war which would take fleets and armies years to bring to a conclusion. When that time comes, responsibility for drawing up plans and for their execution should be entrusted to an expert air strategist. But that time has not yet arrived.

We are engaged in a colossal struggle between two groups of nations and empires. The side that wins in the end will be the side that has concentrated all its resources by sea, land, and air in a well co-ordinated plan to win battles. Not only that, but much more. Whole nations must believe in their cause, and face sacrifice and hardship in its advancement. Men, women, and children must give their labour to produce munitions and equipment for their champions in arms, and the operations of the armed forces must be supplemented by economic and financial pressure upon the enemy. These last are relative questions in

a war of endurance; it is a question which side is affected most seriously. Our own civilian population must be fed, clothed, and lodged, and the fighting forces must be paid for.

In devising an organisation for the successful conduct of war we must therefore provide, firstly, for ensuring the support of the nation; secondly, for the strategic control of sea, land, and air forces to defeat those of the enemy; thirdly, for bringing financial and economic pressure to bear upon the hostile nation, while ensuring the means of existence for our own people; and fourthly, for co-operation in all these matters with Allied countries. Let us see whether any historical precedent will help us.

The Seven Years War (1756-63) has been described as the most successful war we ever fought. It began, as many of our wars have begun, with disaster. Admiral Byng's fleet failed to relieve Minorca, and withdrew from the Mediterranean. The whole responsibility—power to act and liability to be called to account—for the strategical conduct of the war was soon after (1757) taken over by a single man, the elder Pitt, afterwards Lord Chatham. In spite of the lee-way that had to be made up at first, there has never been a war in which more effective use was made of our sea and land forces, and we have never come better out of a great struggle. But it would be a fatal mistake to copy rigidly any organisation of the past without first ascertaining the conditions which underlay its success. It depended upon the characteristics of an individual statesman. Pitt, we are told, was a genius in the conduct of warfare, of which he had made a special study. He had read every available military book, had never followed any profession but that of a soldier before he entered public life; he had held an office, that of Paymaster, which enabled him thoroughly to master the details of military administration. More important still, his studies and knowledge of the nature of warfare qualified him, to a degree unusual amongst statesmen, to judge the capacities of the 'experts,' the admirals and generals, upon whose advice he based his strategy. Of the former Anson, and of the latter Ligonier, were the most eminent of his councillors. They held the positions of First Lord of the Admiralty and Commander-in-Chief respectively, both positions of real responsibility, directly under the Prime Minister, and dealing directly with him. Next we must remember the difference between the nature of warfare in 1757 and 1917. Wars used to be conducted between Governments, using standing armies and navies as their instruments. We began this war with very much the same idea, the 'business

as usual' idea for the portion of the nation not taking an active part in the conflict. Although it has taken a long time, we now realise that the present struggle is between whole nations in arms, and the participation of every individual in the nation in some capacity or other is one of the main conditions of success. A third and last point to be borne in mind is that a century and a half ago nations were more self-supporting. There was not the same interdependence in finances and in the economic life of the people. A struggle that used acutely to affect only the belligerents, now affects acutely all the nations of the world.

Where does our investigation lead us? Let us remember that this is a war about such deep-seated principles that compromise is impossible. To lose it would for Germany be an inconvenience; for the nations under the British Crown, for France, Russia, Italy, Belgium, Servia, Greece, and Montenegro it would be death; for the United States, dishonour. The situation is serious enough to justify radical alterations in the system of control, if they are required to ensure victory. Systems are useless without the right men, but in these days no men could get the most effective results under a defective system. They must have a free hand in their respective departments, subject to the control of one co-ordinating authority in case their work should overlap.

For each belligerent country the ideal system requires a Pitt for general control. His attributes have been described. To assist him, he must have 'experts' in the conduct of sea and land warfare, and, nowadays, experts in finance and economics. If 'one-man' control is impracticable, for want of the right man or for other reasons, some small executive body is required, whether it be called a Cabinet, a Committee, a Council, or what not. Since in time of war all things are subsidiary to the defeat of the enemy's armed forces, the seaman and the soldier members must not be merely 'advisers.'¹ This system was proved to be unsatisfactory, and nearly led us to disaster. Their status must be at least equal, certainly not subordinate, to that granted to economists and financiers. Provided the right men are chosen, success will depend upon their being left as free as possible in their respective departments. Though we have not been so informed definitely, the higher control of our own war strategy is probably being conducted, formally or informally, on some such lines at the present time; if not, it will be, before we can hope for victory. There can be no fear with us of interference by the 'experts' with policy. They have nothing to do with it, excepting to advise about the forces required to ensure its success,

¹ I.e. without responsibility, as defined.

and their only wish is to be the good servants of the country, never its masters. It is a vital mistake to confuse national policy with the detailed method of using fleets and armies to defeat those of the enemy. In time of peace their distribution and employment under popular control may be the ideal. In war-time it is an impossibility.

It has been proved throughout all ages that some form of dictatorship, whether by a single man or a very small group, such as a triumvirate, is the most successful form of organisation to handle the forces to the best effect in warfare. It has also been proved that seamen and soldiers, who have spent their lives in the study and practice of their profession, and know the nature of the instruments with which they are working, are likely to be the best strategists at sea and on land respectively. Their operations, especially in a great amphibious war, require co-ordination by some authority not belonging to either service, but suited by temperament and by study for the conduct of warfare, like the elder Pitt.

The constructive proposal by Sir Thomas Mackenzie in the note he appended to the Report of the Dardanelles Commission embodies a principle proved both in ancient and in modern wars to be sound.

The Minority Report, signed by Mr. Walter Roch, contained a further proposal that all combined operations should be thoroughly considered by a joint naval and military staff before they are undertaken. This would follow at once the adoption of the other proposal. Expert strategists, both seamen and soldiers, would never agree to accept responsibility for the initiation of a plan which had not been worked out in detail by the staff allowed them for the purpose. Combined plans would be worked out by them both in consultation.

In conclusion, it may be necessary to add that this paper deals only with systems for controlling the conduct of actual warfare. The only policy must then be to defeat the enemy's armed forces as expeditiously as possible, and to make the best use of all the resources available for the purpose. I have not dealt with peace conditions. In time of peace, policy as controlled by 'politicians,' in the original and best sense of the term, must dominate everything, and the system of higher control over the armed forces must be devised accordingly. Wise statesmen in future will see that the policy, whatever it may be, is supported by armed force strong enough to ensure a good

prospect of its success. This strength can only be based upon hypothetical plans of campaign. A proper staff, both naval and military, is required to work out these plans in time of peace, and the time has now arrived when representatives of the Air Service must be added to their numbers. Unless these hypothetical plans are carefully worked out, it is impossible to determine either the strength of the forces required, or the state of readiness in which they must be maintained. But these are peace questions. We are now at war, and everything must give way to the most urgent need, victory over the armed forces of the enemy.

Of ultimate victory we are assured. We are fighting for freedom, and not for the subjection of all nations of the world to our will. This victory will be deferred until we and our Allies can employ our forces, naval, military, economic, and financial, in combination with each other in a single and well co-ordinated plan. In this paper I have dealt with the comparatively simple problem of ensuring the effective use of the forces of a single Power. The co-operation of allied forces is more difficult to ensure. If we cannot devise a responsible executive body to govern the policy and control the strategy of several Powers, we must at least ensure that the Allied naval strategy is co-ordinated by responsible admirals, and the military strategy by responsible generals. We must also ensure similar co-operation between the economists and the financiers of the respective countries to advance the plans of the admirals and generals, and to guarantee the endurance of the nations engaged in the struggle. The ideal would be for all the Allied nations to entrust the co-ordination of all these forces to one man. A 'super-man' would be required, and, as this ideal is probably unattainable, the only alternative is co-ordination by trusted statesmen sitting in conference. Combined action by our opponents depends upon their subservience to the Hohenzollern dynasty and to the Prussian military caste, with their avowed war doctrine of violence and cunning above all moral obligations.¹ Their combination depends upon one example of cunning, the lie that the German Empire was in danger of attack in 1914. Their extraordinary belief in this falsehood will apparently continue as long as they maintain their faith in military success, which can only be prevented by combination between the Allies in using the vast resources under their control.

¹ *German War Book.*

MOON OF ISRAEL.

A TALE OF THE EXODUS.

BY H. RIDER HAGGARD.

CHAPTER I.

SCRIBE ANA COMES TO TANIS.

THIS is the story of me, Ana the scribe, son of Meri, and of certain of the days that I have spent upon the earth. These things I have written down now that I am very old in the reign of Rameses, the third of that name, when Egypt is once more strong and as she was in the ancient time. I have written them before death takes me, that they may be buried with me in death, for as my spirit shall arise in the hour of resurrection, so also these my words may arise in their hour and tell to those who shall come after me upon the earth of what I knew upon the earth. Let it be as Those in heaven shall decree. At least I write and what I write is true.

I tell of his divine Majesty whom I loved and love as my own soul, Seti Meneptah the second, whose day of birth was my day of birth, the Hawk who has flown to heaven before me; of Userti the Proud, his queen, she who afterwards married his divine Majesty, Saptah, whom I saw laid in her tomb at Thebes. I tell of Merapi, who was named Moon of Israel, and of her people, the Hebrews, who dwelt for long in Egypt and departed thence, having paid us back in loss and shame for all the good and ill we gave them. I tell of the war between the gods of Egypt and the god of Israel, and of much that befell therein.

Also I, the King's Companion, the great scribe, the beloved of the Pharaohs who have lived beneath the sun with me, tell of other men and matters. Behold! is it not written in this roll? Read, ye who shall find in the days unborn, if your gods have given you skill. Read, O children of the future, and learn the secrets of that past which to you is so far away and yet in truth so near.

As it chanced, although the Prince Seti and I were born upon the same day and therefore, like the other mothers of gentle rank whose children saw the light upon that day, my mother received

Pharaoh's gift and I received the title of Royal Twin in Ra, never did I set eyes upon the divine Prince Seti until the thirtieth birthday of both of us. All of which happened thus.

In those days the great Pharaoh, Rameses the second, and after him his son Meneptah who succeeded when he was already old, since the mighty Rameses was taken to Osiris after he had counted one hundred risings of the Nile, dwelt for the most part at the city of Tanis in the desert, whereas I dwelt with my parents at the ancient, white-walled city of Memphis on the Nile. At times Meneptah and his court visited Memphis, as also they visited Thebes, where this king lies in his royal tomb to-day. But save on one occasion, the young Prince Seti, the heir-apparent, the Hope of Egypt, came not with them, because his mother, As-nefert, did not favour Memphis, where some trouble had befallen her in youth—they say it was a love matter that cost the lover his life and her a sore heart—and Seti stayed with his mother, who would not suffer him out of sight of her eyes.

Once he came indeed when he was fifteen years of age, to be proclaimed to the people as son of his father, as Son of the Sun, as the future wearer of the Double Crown, and then we, his twins in Ra—there were nineteen of us who were gently born—were called by name to meet him and to kiss his royal feet. I made ready to go in a fine new robe embroidered in purple with the name of Seti and my own. But on that very morning by the gift of some evil god I was smitten with spots all over my face and body, a common sickness that affects the young. So it happened that I did not see the Prince, for before I was well again he had left Memphis.

Now my father Meri was a scribe of the great temple of Ptah, and I was brought up to his trade in the school of the temple, where I copied many rolls and also wrote out Books of the Dead which I adorned with paintings. Indeed, in this business I became so clever that, after my father went blind some years before his death, I earned enough to keep him, and my sisters also until they married. Mother I had none, for she was gathered to Osiris while I was still very little. So life went on from year to year, but in my heart I hated my lot. While I was still a boy there rose up in me a desire—not to copy what others had written, but to write what others should copy. I became a dreamer of dreams. Walking at night beneath the palm-trees upon the banks of Nile I watched the moon shining upon the waters, and in its rays I seemed to see many beautiful things. Pictures appeared there which were different

from any that I saw in the world of men, although in them were men and women and even gods.

Of these pictures I made stories in my heart and at last, although that was not for some years, I began to write these stories down in my spare hours. My sisters found me doing so and told my father, who scolded me for such foolishness, which he said would never furnish me with bread and beer. But still I wrote on in secret by the light of the lamp in my chamber at night. Then my sisters married, and one day my father died suddenly while he was reciting prayers in the temple. I caused him to be embalmed in the best fashion and buried with honour in the tomb he had made ready for himself, although to pay the costs I was obliged to copy Books of the Dead for nearly two years, working so hard that I found no time for the writing of stories.

When at length I was free from debt I met a maiden from Thebes with a beautiful face that always seemed to smile, and she took my heart from my breast into her own. In the end, after I returned from fighting in the war against the Nine Bow Barbarians, to which I was summoned like other young men, I married her. As for her name, let it be, I will not think of it even to myself. We had one child, a little girl which died within two years of her birth, and then I learned what sorrow can mean to man. At first my wife was sad, but her grief departed with time and she smiled again as she used to do. Only she said that she would bear no more children for the gods to take. Having little to do she began to go about the city and make friends whom I did not know, for of these, being a beautiful woman, she found many. The end of it was that she departed back to Thebes with a soldier whom I had never even seen, for I was always working at home thinking of the babe who was dead and how happiness is a bird that no man can snare, though sometimes, of its own will, it flies in at his window-place.

It was after this that my hair went white before I had counted thirty years.

Now, as I had none to work for and my wants were few and simple, I found more time for the writing of stories which, for the most part, were somewhat sad. One of these stories a fellow scribe borrowed from me and read aloud to a company, whom it pleased so much that there were many who asked leave to copy it and publish it abroad. So by degrees I became known as a teller of tales, which tales I caused to be copied and sold, though out of them I made but little. Still my fame grew till on a day I received a message

from the Prince Seti, my twin in Ra, saying that he had read certain of my writings which pleased him much and that it was his wish to look upon my face. I thanked him humbly by the messenger and answered that I would travel to Tanis and wait upon his Highness. First, however, I finished the longest story which I had yet written. It was called the Tale of Two Brothers, and told how the faithless wife of one of them brought trouble on the other, so that he was killed. Of how, also, the just gods brought him to life again, and many other matters. This story I dedicated to his Highness, the Prince Seti, and with it in the bosom of my robe I travelled to Tanis, having hidden about me a sum of gold that I had saved.

So I came to Tanis at the beginning of winter and, walking to the palace of the Prince, boldly demanded an audience. But now my troubles began, for the guards and watchmen thrust me from the doors. In the end I bribed them and was admitted to the ante-chambers, where were merchants, jugglers, dancing-women, officers, and many others, all of them, it seemed, waiting to see the Prince; folk who, having nothing to do, pleased themselves by making mock of me, a stranger. When I had mixed with them for several days, I gained their friendship by telling to them one of my stories, after which I was always welcome among them. Still I could come no nearer to the Prince, and as my store of money was beginning to run low, I bethought me that I would return to Memphis.

One day, however, a long-bearded old man, with a gold-tipped wand of office, who had a bull's head embroidered on his robe, stopped in front of me and, calling me a white-headed crow, asked me what I was doing hopping day by day about the chambers of the palace. I told him my name and business and he told me his, which it seemed was Pambasa, one of the Prince's chamberlains. When I asked him to take me to the Prince, he laughed in my face and said darkly that the road to his Highness's presence was paved with gold. I understood what he meant and gave him a gift which he took as readily as a cock picks corn, saying that he would speak of me to his master and that I must come back again.

I came thrice and each time that old cock picked more corn. At last I grew enraged and, forgetting where I was, began to shout at him and call him a thief, so that folk gathered round to listen. This seemed to frighten him. At first he looked towards the door as though to summon the guard to thrust me out, then changed

his mind, and in a grumbling voice bade me follow him. We went down long passages, past soldiers who stood at watch in them still as mummies in their coffins, till at length we came to some brodered curtains. Here Pambasa whispered to me to wait, and passed through the curtains, which he left not quite drawn, so that I could see the room beyond and hear all that took place there.

It was a small room like to that of any scribe, for on the tables were palettes, pens of reed, ink in alabaster vases, and sheets of papyrus pinned upon boards. The walls were painted not as I was wont to paint the Books of the Dead, but after the fashion of an earlier time, such as I have seen in certain ancient tombs, with pictures of wild fowl rising from the swamps and of trees and plants as they grow. Against the walls hung racks of wood in which were papyrus rolls, and on the hearth burned a fire of cedar.

By this fire stood the Prince, whom I knew from his statues. His years appeared fewer than mine although we were born upon the same day, and he was tall and thin, very fair also for one of our people, perhaps because of the Syrian blood that ran in his veins. His hair was straight and brown like to that of northern folk who come to trade in the markets of Egypt, and his eyes were grey rather than black, set beneath somewhat prominent brows such as those of his father, Meneptah. His face was sweet as a woman's, but made curious by certain wrinkles which ran from the corners of the eyes towards the ears. I think that these came from the bending of the brow in thought, but others say that they were inherited from an ancestress on the female side. Bakenkhonsu my friend, the old prophet who served under the first Seti and died but the other day, having lived a hundred and twenty years, told me that he knew her before she was married, and that she and her descendant, Seti, might have been twins.

In his hand the Prince held an open roll, a very ancient writing as I, who am skilled in such matters that have to do with my trade, knew from its appearance. Lifting his eyes suddenly from the study of this roll, he saw the chamberlain standing before him.

'You come at a good time, Pambasa,' he said in a voice that was very soft and pleasant, and yet most manlike. 'You are old and doubtless wise. Say, are you wise, Pambasa?'

'Yes, your Highness. I am wise like your Highness's uncle, Khaemuas the mighty magician, whose sandals I used to clean when I was young.'

'Is it so? Then why are you so careful to hide your wisdom which should be open like a flower for us poor bees to suck at? Well, I am glad to learn that you are wise, for in this book of magic that I have been reading I find problems worthy of Khaemuas the departed, whom I only remember as a brooding, black-browed man much like my cousin, Amenmeses his son—save that no one can call Amenmeses wise.'

'Why is your Highness glad?'

'Because you, being by your own account his equal, can now interpret the matter as Khaemuas would have done. You know, Pambasa, that had he lived he would have been Pharaoh in place of my father. He died too soon, however, which proves to me that there was something in this tale of his wisdom, since no really wise man would ever wish to be Pharaoh of Egypt.'

Pambasa stared with his mouth open.

'Not wish to be Pharaoh,' he began——

'Now, Pambasa the Wise,' went on the Prince as though he had not heard him. 'Listen. This old book gives a charm "to empty the heart of its weariness," that it says is the oldest and most common sickness in the world from which only kittens, some children, and mad people are free. It appears that the cure for this sickness, so says the book, is to stand on the top of the Pyramid of Khufu at midnight at that moment when the moon is largest in the whole year, and drink from the cup of dreams, reciting meanwhile a spell written here at length in language which I cannot read.'

'There is no virtue in spells, Prince, if anyone can read them.'

'And no use, it would seem, if they can be read by none.'

'Moreover, how can anyone climb the pyramid of Khufu, which is covered with polished marble, even in the day let alone at midnight, your Highness, and there drink of the cup of dreams?'

'I do not know, Pambasa. All I know is that I weary of this foolishness, and of the world. Tell me of something that will lighten my heart, for it is heavy.'

'There are jugglers without, Prince, one of whom says he can throw a rope into the air and climb up it until he vanishes into heaven.'

'When he has done it in your sight, Pambasa, bring him to me, but not before. Death is the only rope by which we can climb to heaven—or be lowered into hell. For remember there is a god called Set, after whom, like my great-grandfather, I am named by the way—the priests alone know why—as well as one called Osiris.'

'Then there are the dancers, Prince, and among them some very finely made girls, for I saw them bathing in the palace lake, such as would have delighted the heart of your grandfather, the great Rameses.'

'They do not delight my heart who want no naked women prancing here. Try again, Pambasa.'

'I can think of nothing else, Prince. Yet, stay. There is a scribe without named Ana, a thin, sharp-nosed man who says he is your Highness's twin in Ra.'

'Ana!' said the Prince. 'He of Memphis who writes stories? Why did you not say so before, you old fool? Let him enter at once, at once.'

Now hearing this I, Ana, walked through the curtains and prostrated myself, saying,

'I am that scribe, O Royal Son of the Sun.'

'How dare you enter the Prince's presence without being bidden——' began Pambasa, but Seti broke in with a stern voice, saying,

'And how dare you, Pambasa, keep this learned man waiting at my door like a dog? Rise, Ana, and cease from giving me titles, for we are not at Court. Tell me, how long have you been in Tanis?'

'Many days, O Prince,' I answered, 'seeking your presence and in vain.'

'And how did you win it at last?'

'By payment, O Prince,' I answered innocently, 'as it seems is usual. The doorkeepers——'

'I understand,' said Seti, 'the doorkeepers! Pambasa, you will ascertain what amount this learned scribe has disbursed to "the doorkeepers" and refund him double. Begone now and see to the matter.'

So Pambasa went, casting a piteous look at me out of the corner of his eye.

'Tell me,' said Seti when he was gone, 'you who must be wise in your fashion, why does a Court always breed thieves?'

'I suppose for the same reason, O Prince, that a dog's back breeds fleas. Fleas must live, and there is the dog.'

'True,' he answered, 'and these palace fleas are not paid enough. If ever I have power I will see to it. They shall be fewer but better fed. Now, Ana, be seated. I know you though you do not know me, and already I have learned to love you through your writings. Tell me of yourself.'

So I told him all my simple tale, to which he listened without a word, and then asked me why I had come to see him. I replied that it was because he had sent for me, which he had forgotten; also because I brought him a story that I had dared to dedicate to him. Then I laid the roll before him on the table.

'I am honoured,' he said in a pleased voice, 'I am greatly honoured. If I like it well, your story shall go to the tomb with me for my Ka to read and re-read until the day of resurrection, though first I will study it in the flesh. Do you know this city of Tanis, Ana?'

I answered that I knew little of it, who had spent my time here haunting the doors of his Highness.

'Then with your leave I will be your guide through it this night, and afterwards we will sup and talk.'

I bowed and he clapped his hands, whereon a servant appeared, not Pambasa, but another.

'Bring two cloaks,' said the Prince, 'I go abroad with the scribe, Ana. Let a guard of four Nubians, no more, follow us, but at a distance and disguised. Let them wait at the private entrance.'

The man bowed and departed swiftly.

Almost immediately a black slave appeared with two long hooded cloaks, such as camel-drivers wear, which he helped us to put on. Then, taking a lamp, he led us from the room through a doorway opposite to that by which I had entered, down passages and a narrow stair that ended in a courtyard. Crossing this we came to a wall, great and thick, in which were double doors sheathed with copper that opened mysteriously at our approach. Outside of these doors stood four tall men, also wrapped in cloaks, who seemed to take no note of us. Still, looking back when we had gone a little way, I observed that they were following us, as though by chance.

How fine a thing, thought I to myself, it is to be a prince who by lifting a finger can thus command service at any moment of the day or night.

Just at that moment Seti said to me,

'See, Ana, how sad a thing it is to be a prince, who cannot even stir abroad without notice to his household and commanding the service of a secret guard to spy upon his every action, and doubtless to make report thereof to the police of Pharaoh.'

There are two faces to everything, thought I to myself again.

CHAPTER II.

THE BREAKING OF THE CUP.

WE walked down a broad street bordered by trees, beyond which were lime-washed, flat-roofed houses built of sun-dried brick, standing, each of them, in its own garden, till at length we came to the great market-place just as the full moon rose above the palm-trees, making the world almost as light as day. Tanis, or Rameses as it is also called, was a very fine city then, if only half the size of Memphis, though now that the Court has left it I hear it is much deserted. About this market-place stood great temples of the gods, with pylons and avenues of sphinxes, also that wonder of the world, the colossal statue of the second Rameses, while to the north upon a mound was the glorious palace of Pharaoh. Other palaces there were also, inhabited by the nobles and officers of the Court, and between them ran long streets where dwelt the citizens, ending, some of them, on that branch of the Nile by which the ancient city stood.

Seti halted to gaze at these wondrous buildings.

'They are very old,' he said, 'but most of them, like the walls and those temples of Amon and of Ptah, have been rebuilt in the time of my grandfather or since his day by the labour of Israelitish slaves who dwell yonder in the rich land of Goshen.'

'They must have cost much gold,' I answered.

'The Kings of Egypt do not pay their slaves,' replied the Prince shortly.

Then we went on and mingled with the thousands of the people who were wandering to and fro seeking rest after the business of the day. Here on the frontier of Egypt were gathered folk of every race: Bedouins from the desert, Syrians from beyond the Red Sea, merchants from the rich Isle of Chittim, travellers from the coast, and traders from the land of Punt and from the unknown countries of the north. All were talking, laughing, and making merry, save some who gathered in circles to listen to a teller of tales or wandering musicians, or to watch women who danced half naked for gifts.

Now and again the crowd would part to let pass the chariot of some noble or lady before which went running footmen who shouted 'Make way, Make way!' and laid about them with their

long wands. Then came a procession of the white-robed priests of Isis travelling by moonlight as was fitting for the servants of the Lady of the Moon, and bearing aloft the holy image of the goddess before which all men bowed and for a little while were silent. After this followed the corpse of some great one newly dead, preceded by a troop of hired mourners who rent the air with their lamentations as they conducted it to the quarter of the embalmers. Lastly, from out of one of the side streets emerged a gang of several hundred hook-nosed and bearded men, among whom were a few women, loosely roped together and escorted by a company of armed guards.

'Who are these?' I asked, for I had never seen their like.

'Slaves of the people of Israel who return from their labour at the digging of the new canal which is to run to the Red Sea,' answered the Prince.

We stood still to watch them go by, and I noted how proudly their eyes flashed and how fierce was their bearing although they were but men in bonds, very weary too and stained by toil in mud and water. Presently this happened. A white-bearded man lagged behind, dragging on the line and checking the march. Thereupon an overseer ran up and flogged him with a cruel whip cut from the hide of the sea-horse. The man turned and, lifting a wooden spade which he carried, struck the overseer such a blow that he cracked his skull so that he fell down dead. Other overseers rushed at the Hebrew, as these Israelites were called, and beat him till he also fell. Then a soldier appeared and, seeing what had happened, drew his bronze sword. From among the throng sprang out a girl, young and very lovely although she was but roughly clad.

Since then I have seen Merapi, Moon of Israel, as she was called, clad in the proud raiment of a queen, and once even of a goddess, but never, I think, did she look more beauteous than in this hour of her slavery. Her large eyes, neither blue nor black, caught the light of the moon and were aswim with tears. Her plenteous bronze-hued hair flowed in great curls over the snow-white bosom that her rough robe revealed. Her delicate hands were lifted as though to ward off the blows which fell upon him whom she sought to protect. Her tall and slender shape stood out against a flare of light which burned upon some market stall. She was beauteous exceedingly, so beauteous that my heart stood still at the sight of her, yes, mine that for some years had held no thought of woman save such as were black and evil.

She cried aloud. Standing over the fallen man she appealed to the soldier for mercy. Then, seeing that there was none to hope for from him, she cast her great eyes around until they fell upon the Prince Seti.

'Oh! Sir,' she wailed, 'you have a noble air. Will you stand by and see my father murdered for no fault?'

'Drag her off, or I smite through her,' shouted the captain, for now she had thrown herself down upon the fallen Israelite. The overseers obeyed, tearing her away.

'Hold, butcher!' cried the Prince.

'Who are you, dog, that dare to teach Pharaoh's officer his duty?' answered the captain, smiting the Prince in the face with his left hand.

Then swiftly he struck downwards and I saw the bronze sword pass through the body of the Israelite, who quivered and lay still. It was all done in an instant, and on the silence that followed rang out the sound of a woman's wail. For a moment Seti choked—with rage, I think. Then he spoke a single word—'Guards!'

The four Nubians, who, as ordered, had kept at a distance, burst through the gathered throng. Ere they reached us I, who till now had stood amazed, sprang at the captain and gripped him by the throat. He struck at me with his bloody sword, but the blow, falling on my long cloak, only bruised me on the left thigh. Then I, who was strong in those days, grappled with him and we rolled together on the ground.

After this there was great tumult. The Hebrew slaves burst their rope and flung themselves upon the soldiers like dogs upon a jackal, battering them with their bare fists. The soldiers defended themselves with swords; the overseers plied their hide whips; women screamed, men shouted. The captain whom I had seized began to get the better of me; at least I saw his sword flash above me and thought that all was over. Doubtless it would have been, had not Seti himself dragged the man backwards and thus given the four Nubian guards time to seize him. Next I heard the Prince cry out in a ringing voice,

'Hold! It is Seti, the son of Pharaoh, the Governor of Tanis, with whom you have to do. See,' and he threw back the hood of his cloak so that the moon shone upon his face.

Instantly there was a great quiet. Then, first one and then another as the truth sank into them, men began to fall upon their knees, and I heard one say in an awed voice,

'The royal Son, the Prince of Egypt struck in the face by a soldier! Blood must pay for it.'

'How is that officer named?' asked Seti, pointing to the man who had killed the Israelite and well-nigh killed me.

Someone answered that he was named Khuaka.

'Bring him to the steps of the temple of Amon,' said Seti to the Nubians who held him fast. 'Follow me, friend Ana, if you have the strength. Nay, lean upon my shoulder.'

So resting upon the shoulder of the Prince, for I was bruised and breathless, I walked with him a hundred paces or more to the steps of the great temple where we climbed to the platform at the head of the stairs. After us came the prisoner, and after him all the multitude, a very great number who stood upon the steps and on the flat ground beyond. The Prince, who was very white and quiet, sat himself down upon the low granite base of a tall obelisk which stood in front of the temple pylon, and said,

'As Governor of Tanis, the City of Rameses, with power of life and death at all hours and in all places, I declare my Court open.'

'The Royal Court is open!' cried the multitude in the accustomed form.

'This is the case,' said the Prince. 'Yonder man who is named Khuaka, by his dress a captain of Pharaoh's army, is charged with the murder of a certain Hebrew, and with the attempted murder of Ana the scribe. Let witnesses be called. Bring the body of the dead man and lay it here before me. Bring the woman who strove to protect him, that she may speak.'

The body was brought and laid upon the platform, its wide eyes staring up at the moon. Then soldiers who had gathered thrust forward the weeping girl.

'Cease from tears,' said Seti, 'and swear by Kephera the creator, and by Maat the goddess of truth and law, to speak nothing but the truth.'

The girl looked up and said in a rich low voice that in some way reminded me of honey being poured from a jar, perhaps because it was thick with strangled sobs,

'O Royal Son of Egypt, I cannot swear by those gods who am a daughter of Israel.'

The Prince looked at her attentively and asked,

'By what god then can you swear, O Daughter of Israel?'

'By Jahveh, O Prince, whom we hold to be the one and only God, the Maker of the world and all that is therein.'

'Then perhaps his other name is Kephera,' said the Prince with a little smile. 'But have it as you will. Swear, then, by your god Jahveh.'

Then she lifted both her hands above her head and said,

'I, Merapi, daughter of Nathan of the tribe of Levi of the people of Israel, swear that I will speak the truth and all the truth in the name of Jahveh, the God of Israel.'

'Tell us what you know of the matter of the death of this man, O Merapi.'

'Nothing that you do not know yourself, O Prince. He who lies there,' and she swept her hand towards the corpse, turning her eyes away, 'was my father, an elder of Israel. The captain Khuaka came when the corn was young to the Land of Goshen to choose those who should work for Pharaoh. He wished to take me into his house. My father refused because from my childhood I had been affianced to a man of Israel; also because it is not lawful under our law for our people to intermarry with your people. Then the captain Khuaka seized my father, although he was of high rank and beyond the age to work for Pharaoh, and he was taken away, as I think, because he would not suffer me to wed Khuaka. A while later I dreamed that my father was sick. Thrice I dreamed it and ran away to Tanis to visit him. But this morning I found him and, O Prince, you know the rest.'

'Is there no more?' asked Seti.

The girl hesitated, then answered,

'Only this, O Prince. This man saw me with my father giving him food, for he was weak and overcome with the toil of digging the mud in the heat of the sun, he who being a noble of our people knew nothing of such labour from his youth. In my presence Khuaka asked my father if now he would give me to him. My father answered that sooner would he see me kissed by snakes and devoured by crocodiles. "I hear you," answered Khuaka. "Learn, now, slave Nathan, before to-morrow's sun arises, you shall be kissed by swords and devoured by crocodiles or jackals." "So be it," said my father, "but learn, O Khuaka, that if so, it is revealed to me who am a priest and a prophet of Jahveh, that before to-morrow's sun you also shall be kissed by swords and of the rest we will talk at the foot of Jahveh's throne."

'Afterwards, as you know, Prince, the overseer flogged my father as I heard Khuaka order him to do if he lagged through weariness, and then Khuaka killed him because my father in his

madness struck the overseer with a mattock. I have no more to say, save that I pray that I may be sent back to my own people there to mourn my father according to our custom.'

'To whom would you be sent? Your mother?'

'Nay, O Prince, my mother, a lady of Syria, is dead. I will go to my uncle, Jabez the Levite.'

'Stand aside,' said Seti. 'The matter shall be seen to later. Appear, O Ana the scribe. Swear the oath and tell us what you have seen of this man's death, since two witnesses are needful.'

So I swore and repeated all this story that I have written down.

'Now, Khuaka,' said the Prince when I had finished, 'have you aught to say?'

'Only this, O Royal One,' answered the captain throwing himself upon his knees, 'that I struck you by accident, not knowing that the person of your Highness was hidden in that long cloak. For this deed it is true I am worthy of death, but I pray you to pardon me because I knew not what I did. The rest is nothing, since I only slew a mutinous slave of the Israelites, as such are slain every day.'

'Tell me, O Khuaka, who are being tried for this man's death and not for the striking of one of royal blood by chance, under which law it is lawful for you to kill an Israelite without trial before the appointed officers of Pharaoh.'

'I am not learned. I do not know the law, O Prince. All that this woman said is false.'

'At least it is not false that yonder man lies dead and that you slew him, as you yourself admit. Learn now, and let all Egypt learn, that even an Israelite may not be murdered for no offence save that of weariness and of paying back unearned blow with blow. Your blood shall answer for his blood. Soldiers! Strike off his head.'

The Nubians leapt upon him, and when I looked again Khuaka's headless corpse lay by the corpse of the Hebrew Nathan and their blood was mingled upon the steps of the temple.

'The business of the Court is finished,' said the Prince. 'Officers, see that this woman is escorted to her own people, and with her the body of her father for burial. See, too, upon your lives that no insult or harm is done to her. Scribe Ana, accompany me hence to my house, where I would speak with you. Let guards precede and follow me.'

He rose and all the people bowed. As he turned to go the lady Merapi stepped forward, and falling upon her knees, said,

‘O most just Prince, now and ever I am your servant.’

Then we set out, and as we left the market-place on our way to the palace of the Prince, I heard a tumult of voices rise behind us, some in praise and some in blame of what had been done. We walked on in silence broken only by the measured tramp of the guards. Presently the moon passed behind a cloud and the world was dark. Then from the edge of the cloud sprang out a ray of light that lay straight and narrow above us on the heavens. Seti studied it a while and said,

‘Tell me, O Ana, of what does that moonbeam put you in mind?’

‘Of a sword, O Prince,’ I answered, ‘stretched out over Egypt and held in the black hand of some mighty god or spirit. See, there is the blade from which fall little clouds like drops of blood, there the hilt of gold, and look! there beneath is the face of the god. Fire streams from his eyeholes and his brow is black and awful. I am afraid, though what I fear I know not.’

‘You have a poet’s mind, Ana. Still, what you see I see and of this I am sure, that some sword of vengeance is indeed stretched out over Egypt because of its evil doings, whereof this light may be the symbol. Behold! it seems to fall upon the temples of the gods and the palace of Pharaoh, and to cleave them. Now it is gone and the night is as nights were from the beginning of the world. Come to my chamber and let us eat. I am weary, I need food and wine, as you must after struggling with that lustful murderer whom I have sent to his own place.’

The guards saluted and were dismissed. We mounted to the Prince’s private chambers, in one of which his servants clad me in fine linen robes after a skilled physician of the household had doctored the bruises upon my thigh over which he tied a bandage spread with balm. Then I was led to a small dining-hall, where I found the Prince waiting for me as though I were some honoured guest and not a poor scribe who had wandered hence from Memphis with my wares. He caused me to sit down at his right hand and even drew up the chair for me himself, whereat I felt abashed. To this day I remember that leather-seated chair. The arms of it ended in ivory sphinxes and on its back of black wood in an oval was inlaid the name of the great Rameses, to whom indeed it had once belonged. Dishes were handed to us—only two of them and those quite simple, for Seti was no great eater—by a young Nubian

slave of a very merry face, and with them wine more delicious than any I had ever tasted.

We ate and drank and the Prince talked to me of my business as a scribe and of the making of tales, which seemed to interest him very much. Indeed one might have thought that he was a pupil in the schools and I the teacher, so humbly and with such care did he weigh everything that I said about my art. Of matters of state or of the dreadful scene of blood through which we had just passed he spoke no word. At the end, however, after a little pause during which he held up a cup of alabaster as thin as an eggshell, studying the light playing through it on the rich red wine within, he said to me,

'Friend Ana, we have passed a stirring hour together, the first perhaps of many, or mayhap the last. Also we were born upon the same day and therefore, unless the astrologers lie, as do other men—and women—beneath the same star. Lastly, if I may say it, I like you well, though I know not how you like me, and when you are in the room with me I feel at ease, which is strange, for I know of no other with whom it is so.

'Now by a chance only this morning I found in some old records which I was studying, that the heir to the throne in Egypt a thousand years ago had, and therefore, as nothing ever changes in Egypt, still has, a right to a private librarian for which the State, that is, the toilers of the land, must pay as in the end they pay for all. Some dynasties have gone by, it seems, since there was such a librarian, I think because most of the heirs to the throne could not, or did not, read. Also by chance I mentioned the matter to the Vizier Nehesi, who grudges me every ounce of gold I spend, as though it were one taken out of his own pouch, which perhaps it is. He answered with that crooked smile of his,

'“Since I know well, Prince, that there is no scribe in Egypt whom you would suffer about you for a single month, I will set the cost of a librarian at the figure at which it stood in the Eleventh Dynasty upon the roll of your Highness's household and defray it from the Royal Treasury until he is discharged.”

'Therefore, Scribe Ana, I offer you this post for one month; that is all for which I can promise you will be paid whatever it may be, for I forget the sum.'

'I thank you, O Prince,' I exclaimed.

'Do not thank me. Indeed if you are wise you will refuse. You have met Pambasa. Well, Nehesi is Pambasa multiplied by ten,

a rogue, a thief, a bully, and one who has Pharaoh's ear. He will make your life a torment to you and clip every ring of gold that at length you wring out of his grip. Moreover the place is wearisome, and I am fanciful and often ill-humoured. Do not thank me, I say. Refuse; return to Memphis and write stories. Shun courts and their plottings. Pharaoh himself is but a face and a puppet through which other voices talk and other eyes shine, and the sceptre which he wields is pulled by strings. And if this is so with Pharaoh, what is the case with his son? Then there are the women, Ana. They will make love to you, Ana, they even do so to me, and I think you told me that you know something of women. Do not accept, go back to Memphis. I will send you some old manuscripts to copy and pay you whatever it is Nehesi allows for the librarian.'

'Yet I accept, O Prince. As for Nehesi I fear him not at all, since at the worst I can write a story about him at which the world would laugh, and rather than that he will pay me my salary.'

'You have more wisdom than I thought, Ana. It never came into my mind to put Nehesi in a story, though it is true I tell tales about him which is much the same thing.'

He bent forward, leaning his head upon his hand, and ceasing from his bantering tone, looked me in the eyes and asked,

'Why do you accept? Let me think now. It is not because you care for wealth if that is to be won here; nor for the pomp and show of courts; nor for the company of the great who really are so small. For all these things you, Ana, have no craving if I read your heart aright, you who are an artist, nothing less and nothing more. Tell me, then, why will you, a free man who can earn your living, linger round a throne and set your neck beneath the heel of princes to be crushed into the common mould of servitors and King's Companions and Bearers of the Footstool?'

'I will tell you, Prince. First, because thrones make history, as history makes thrones, and I think that great events are on foot in Egypt in which I would have my share. Secondly, because the gods bring gifts to men only once or twice in their lives and to refuse them is to offend the gods who gave them those lives to use to ends of which we know nothing. And thirdly—here I hesitated.

'And thirdly—out with the thirdly for, doubtless, it is the real reason.'

'And thirdly, O Prince—well, the word sounds strangely upon a man's lips—but thirdly because I love you. From the moment

that my eyes fell upon your face I loved you as I never loved any other man—not even my father. I know not why. Certainly it is not because you are a prince.’

When he heard these words Seti sat brooding and so silent that, fearing lest I, a humble scribe, had been too bold, I added hastily,

‘Let your Highness pardon his servant for his presumptuous words. It was his servant’s heart that spoke and not his lips.’

He lifted his hand and I stopped.

‘Ana, my twin in Ra,’ he said, ‘do you know that I never had a friend?’

‘A prince who has no friend!’

‘Never, none. Now I begin to think that I have found one. The thought is strange and warms me. Do you know also that when my eyes fell upon your face I loved you also, the gods know why? It was as though I had found one who was dear to me thousands of years ago but whom I had lost and forgotten. Perhaps this is but foolishness, or perhaps here we have the shadow of something great and beautiful which dwells elsewhere in the place we call the Kingdom of Osiris—beyond the grave, Ana.’

‘Such thoughts have come to me at times, Prince. I mean that all we see is shadow; that we ourselves are shadows and that the realities who cast them live in a different home which is lit by some spirit sun that never sets.’

The Prince nodded his head and again was silent for a while. Then he took his beautiful alabaster cup, and pouring wine into it, he drank a little and passed the cup to me.

‘Drink also, Ana,’ he said, ‘and pledge me as I pledge you, in token that by decree of the Creator who made the hearts of men, henceforward our two hearts are as the same heart through good and ill, through triumph and defeat, till death takes one of us. Henceforward, Ana, unless you show yourself unworthy, I hide no thought from you.’

Flushing with joy I took the cup, saying,

‘I add to your words, O Prince. We are one, not for this life alone but for all the lives to be. Death, O Prince, is, I think, but a single step in the pylon stair which leads at last to that dizzy height whence we see the face of God and hear his voice tell us what and why we are.’

Then I pledged him, and drank, bowing, and he bowed back to me.

‘What shall we do with the cup, Ana, the sacred cup that has

held this rich heart-wine? Shall I keep it? No, it no longer belongs to me. Shall I give it to you? No, it never can be yours alone. See, we will break the priceless thing.'

Seizing it by its stem, with all his strength he struck the cup upon the table. Then what seemed to me to be a marvel happened, for instead of shattering as I thought it surely would, it split in two from rim to foot. Whether this was by chance or whether the artist who fashioned it in some bygone generation had worked the two halves separately and cunningly cemented them together, to this hour I do not know. At least so it befell.

'This is fortunate, Ana,' said the Prince, laughing a little in his light way. 'Now take you the half that lies nearest to you and I will take mine. If you die first I will lay my half upon your breast, and if I die first you shall do the same by me, or if the priests forbid it because I am royal and may not be profaned, cast the thing into my tomb. What should we have done had the alabaster shattered into fragments, Ana, and what omen should we have read in them?'

'Why ask, O Prince, seeing that it has befallen otherwise.'

Then I took my half, laid it against my forehead and hid it in the bosom of my robe, and as I did, so did Seti.

So in this strange fashion the royal Seti and I sealed the holy compact of our brotherhood, as I think not for the first time or the last.

(To be continued.)

